

# OUTLINES OF RUSSIAN CULTURE

## *Part I*

### Religion and the Church

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## *Part I*

Religion and the Church

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## *Part II*

Literature

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## *Part III*

Architecture, Painting, and Music

# OUTLINES OF RUSSIAN CULTURE

## *Part I*

# Religion and the Church

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*By*

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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

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SOME five and thirty years ago in the first book of mine to be published in the United States,<sup>1</sup> I tried to give American readers a clearer understanding of Russia and of Russian problems through an analysis of the long evolution that had produced them. In the present book my method remains the same, but how profoundly have things changed in Russia since 1905!

The crisis that I then foretold has really come, and with it real revolution. The avowed aim of the victors in the revolution was the obliteration of all of Russia's "bourgeois" past and the founding of a Russia that would be a fatherland for the toiling masses of the whole world. I was not alone in believing that the habitual course of such attempts would be followed again, and that the high ideals and early successes would be greatly modified by the conditions that Russia's past had brought forth. Indeed, in my second American book, published in 1928 as the new régime reached the end of its first decade, I presented the trend in that light. The "today" of 1928 was far from the "tomorrow" predicted in 1918. Actuality had forced such substantial concessions that the result held few extraordinary revelations.

But there was no admitted surrender. There were further exertions, and the sacrifice of more millions of lives. Another dozen years has elapsed, and where are we now?

The revolutionary cycle has apparently reached its predestined end. Under the new name of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Russia is still there—a Russia even more centralized and ruled more severely than ever under the *ancien régime*, but still Russia. The new Union is heir to all the evils of the old bureaucracy, evils that have been exaggerated while its few virtues have been eliminated. Far from "international," Russian communism

<sup>1</sup> *Russia and Its Crisis* (1905).

has been restricted within its national borders and has followed a pattern that, whatever else it may be, is certainly not socialistic. The only description, good or bad, that can be applied to Russian foreign policy is nationalistic imperialism. It was quite consistent with this policy when the rulers of Russia issued orders that the communist manuals of history were to be rewritten to include the traditional structure of Russian history with the saints and heroes of the olden days. The link with the past was officially recognized.

But it was only with the remote past, and between that past and the communist present there lay a period still unacceptable to the present rulers of Russia—the intermediate period of Russian “bourgeois” civilization. For the educated class that had made that civilization and had nurtured its growth in the last two or three centuries had been mercilessly destroyed in the storm, and as yet no other had taken its place. So the ascending spirals of evolution suffered a break, and the wit and wisdom of the old literature was not carried forward. The result was a lowering of the standards of culture. As in a geological cataclysm, lower strata were forced up to displace the higher.

I do not believe that this is the inevitable law of all revolutions, but our revolution was an elemental one ruled by elemental law. The law that Lucretius has called the *Natura rerum*.

. . . *Natura nec ullam*

*Rem gigni patitur, nisi morte adiuta aliena.*<sup>2</sup>

There is a sort of consolation in this Epicurean sentence. The “alien” element of higher cultural achievement is hopelessly gone in Russia, but new elements have appeared. *Quality* has gone, but *quantity* has succeeded—the larger extension of the social base whence cultural seeds may be borrowed. In this very book the reader can discern, here and there, tendrils of new life pushing their way through the ruins of the old.

In 1905 I ventured to draw a comparison between the “young peoples” of our two lands, Russia and the United States. To-day, when the term has become a political slogan and “old” has come to be identified with “decaying,” I would make an exception.

<sup>2</sup> “Nature does not suffer one thing to be born, unless aided by another’s death”

"Young" can mean many things. A people may be very old in its material existence, yet young in civilization. That is the case with Russia. Or a "young" people, materially, may be the bearers of a very old civilization, as America is. My comparison still holds so far as the material bases of the two peoples is concerned, for they are both the result of a great migratory process carried through in rich and undeveloped lands peopled by primitive races. The process resulted for each in a unification into a great nation conscious of its historical mission. But here the comparison must stop. For the American settlers brought from their old homes the principles and habits of political liberty and social order, and what has recently happened to Russia could therefore never happen to them. Russian pioneers, on the other hand, began their process when they first emerged into history. That is why "young" America's torch of liberty illumines the world while today's "young" Russia hesitates in a stage equally distant from the modern order and medieval violence unbridled by law.

But happily this "young Russia" is not *all* of Russia. Russia as a whole needs no rehabilitation. This book will show the reader what Russia has achieved in the long chain of her generations. A few decades cannot utterly destroy the fruit of these centuries. My book was not written to prove this, but if proof is needed, it is here.

That is why I am particularly glad that this part of my larger work on Russian civilization has now found its way to the nation whose development I witnessed for a third of a century, and which in studying I came to admire and love. I am extremely obliged to Mrs. Ughet and to my learned friend, Professor Michael Karpovich of Harvard University, for the excellent form they have given the English translation of my Russian text. I feel that this third book to appear under my name in America deserves it especially, for it renders accessible a part of my life-work.

PAUL MILIUKOV

*Montpellier, France*  
*Noel, 1940.*



## EDITOR'S FOREWORD

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THE author of this work scarcely needs introduction to English-speaking readers. Eminent scholar and statesman, he has long been known far outside the boundaries of his native land. The dean of Russian historians, he has to his credit a number of scholarly works of primary importance. And he himself belongs to history as the recognized leader of the constitutional opposition during the last years of the Imperial régime, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the first democratic government Russia ever had. An exile from his country since the establishment of the Communist dictatorship, today, at the age of eighty-two, he lives in Unoccupied France, maintaining both his interest in historical problems and his faith in the ultimate triumph of liberty and justice.

The present version of the *Outlines of Russian Culture* is only a part of the Russian original. It is, however, its central part and the only one that so far has been completed. Volume One of the last revised Russian edition,<sup>1</sup> dealing with the material foundations of Russian culture, is not complete, and as yet only the first section of it has been published. Volume Three of the original, devoted to the history of political ideas in Russia, in its present form does not go beyond the eighteenth century. From Volume Two of the *Outlines* we have selected for translation sections dealing with culture in the proper sense of the word—religion, literature, art. We have omitted the section on education, partly because there are some competent books on the subject available in English, but mostly because of considerations of space.

In addition, the sections that we are offering in our translation have been abridged because it was felt that such a detailed account was not necessary in a book addressed to non-Russian readers.

<sup>1</sup> *Ocherki Po Istorii Russkoi Kultury* (Paris, 1930-37), Vols I-III

The task of making the deletions was at once the most difficult and the most responsible part of my work as editor. In performing it I was guided by the desire to retain intact all the essential material and all the shades of the author's thought. The manuscript has been carefully gone over by Mr. Miliukov, and it has been a source of great satisfaction to me that it has met with his unqualified approval. The present book, therefore, is more than a mere translation. It is an authorized abridged version of the original, specially prepared for the American edition.

In writing this work for his compatriots, the author naturally presupposed a certain knowledge of facts on the part of his Russian public to a degree which we have no right to expect from our non-Russian readers. This has necessitated occasional explanatory notes which I have tried to provide without intruding too often between the author and the reader. I have tried also to summarize in brief postscripts the development in the fields of religion, literature, and art, respectively, during the years which have elapsed since the publication of the last Russian edition of Mr. Miliukov's work. Finally, I have thought it useful to attach to each part a small selected bibliography in Western languages for the use of those who would like to explore the subject further.

I am convinced that the publication of the American edition of the *Outline* answers an acutely felt need on the part of both students of Russian history and general readers. As a comprehensive survey of Russian culture, from its origins to the present, this is the only work of its kind. While containing a wealth of factual information, it is primarily a synthesis and an interpretation, and as such it is inevitably of a somewhat controversial nature. Undoubtedly there will be some, for instance, who will not agree with Mr. Miliukov's reading of Russia's religious history, and in particular with his critical attitude towards the part played by the Orthodox church in the modern period. There will be others who probably will find that he underestimates the achievements of Soviet literature and art. Still others, and among them many representatives of my generation, will be inclined to put a greater emphasis on the element of originality both in the Russian icon painting of the later Middle Ages and the neo-classical architecture of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. To

the members of the same group the Symbolist period of the early twentieth century would appear as a period of cultural renaissance rather than decadence. The number of such probable controversial points could be increased. Quite obviously, these and similar problems are problems of interpretation, and with regard to them there never can be, and perhaps there should not be, a complete unanimity of opinion.

But even those who will tend to disagree with Mr. Miliukov must acknowledge the impressive extent of his erudition, the breadth and unity of his conception, and above all that degree of detachment which is truly remarkable in a man who all his life has been not only a scholar but also a fighter, and an active participant in historical events.

My editorial work has been greatly facilitated by encouragement and advice I have received from many friends and colleagues. Thanks are due Professor B. A. Bakhmeteff, Mr. S. Bolan, Professor S. H. Cross, Dr. F. Epstein, Mr. D. Fedotoff White, Dr. H. T. Levin, Mr. P. A. Pertzoff, Professor E. J. Simmons, Mrs. Manya Gordon, Mr. V. Terentiev, Professor N. S. Timasheff, and Professor G. Vernadsky. I am particularly indebted to my friend Mr. Roger Dow and to Mrs. Olga Oushakoff for their help in the final preparation of the manuscript.

MICHAEL KARPOVICH

*Cambridge, Mass.*  
*October, 1941*





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# I

## THE BEGINNINGS OF CHRISTIANITY IN RUSSIA

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THE cultural influence of the church and religion absolutely predominated in the earlier periods of Russian history, as it usually does with all peoples in an identical stage of development. Nevertheless there was, and still exists, a widespread opinion that the prevailing influence of the church was specifically the national peculiarity of the Russian people. There were two divergent views regarding this peculiarity. The forebears of Slavophilism ascribed to it all the virtues of Russian life. They believed that devotion to the will of God, humility, the love of neighbor, and spiritual contemplation, constituting the very substance of Christian ethics, were eminently natural to the Russian character. In the complete accord of the Christian and national virtues they saw the assurance of a great future to the Russian people. The intellectuals of the eighteen-nineties also attempted to revive this idea, and gained an unexpected influence over the émigré youth of the twentieth century who were reared under the impressions of war and revolution.

The other view ascribed to this peculiarity all the shortcomings of Russian life. It found its most vivid expression in the writings of Chaadaev.<sup>1</sup> If Russia lags behind Europe, if its past is sad and its future dark, if it runs the risk of remaining for ages frozen in its Chinese immobility, it is due to corrupted Byzantium. From this poisoned source Russia adopted the great Christian conception, whose vital force was severed at its root by Byzantine for-

<sup>1</sup> Russian religious thinker of the early nineteenth century — ED

malism. Actually the influence of the Byzantine church on Russian culture was great, but it was a destructive influence.

These two conflicting views agree on one point: the recognition of the great cultural importance of a definite religious form. We shall not analyze this point of view in its essence. Regardless of our opinion, the fact is obvious that, to exert its greatest influence on life, the most lofty, the most perfect religious principle must be assimilated more or less fully and consciously. Yet even the Slavophiles admitted, through Khomiakov, their most outstanding representative and theological authority, that it was a great idealization of its past to describe ancient Russia as truly Christian. According to Khomiakov's sound opinion, ancient Russia had assimilated only the external form—the ritual, not the spirit and substance of Christian faith. Consequently, religion could not exert either as beneficent or as deterring an influence on the development of Russian nationality as the Slavophiles and Chaadaev supposed. Since then the views of Khomiakov have been generally adopted and are to be found in the textbooks on the history of the church.

Thus to accept without further examination the Russian nationality as truly Christian would greatly exaggerate the extent of true Christianity the Russians were able to assimilate. An equal exaggeration of the influence of religion would be to charge it with Russia's backwardness. This backwardness had other purely organic reasons, the effect of which extended to religion itself. The new religion was not only unable to build up the Russian mentality, but on the contrary it suffered from the primitiveness of this mentality. While holding different views on the Byzantine form of religious faith assumed by Russia, it is impossible to deny the fact that in its essence this faith surpassed anything which the Russian people of those days could have assimilated.

The substance of Byzantine Orthodoxy,<sup>2</sup> as first adopted, can be judged from a very instructive and valuable document. The religion introduced by St. Vladimir about 990 found many ardent spirits who rushed passionately towards the new "spiritual aliment" eager to partake of the viands of the Byzantine holy feast.

<sup>2</sup> The term "Orthodoxy" is used throughout this study in its specific sense, to designate Eastern Christianity as distinguished from Roman Catholicism.—Ed.

In the still pagan Russia there were established pure types of oriental monasticism, hermitical life, reclusion, imitation of Simeon Stylites,<sup>3</sup> and many other varieties of corporal self-torture. In the wake of the first pioneers of the new religion came their followers, ever increasing in numbers though not always perhaps as ardent and devoted to asceticism. As usual the fervent inspiration that swayed the ranks of "Christian Warriors" produced an intensive creative power. The last representatives of a generation which had witnessed Russia's conversion had scarcely died when a reverent legend about their lives began to pass from mouth to mouth and later was written down for the instruction of posterity. These writings have preserved to the present time the pregnant memory of the first spiritual upheaval in Russia, when the most pious members of the community joined the founders of Russian asceticism at the Pechersky Monastery, near Kiev, for a united effort. Somewhat later these records were collected in a volume, and form the famous *Paterikon* (Lives of the Pechersky Fathers), which for a long time was the most popular and favorite book with the masses. The extent of this upheaval in Russia, where paganism had recently been abandoned, can be judged from the traditions in the *Paterikon*.

It must not be forgotten that the ascetic of today was but yesterday one of the community, though ranking among its best members. Having shed the old Adam, he could not with one stroke destroy the old pagan and barbarian within himself. Like Abbot Theodosius, with his powerful, physically strong constitution, the monks were accustomed to endure the discomforts of an uncultured existence, and physical labor was habitual to them. Cutting wood and dragging it to the monastery, carrying water, working as carpenters, grinding meal, or helping in the kitchen meant to the brethren only a continuation behind the monastery walls of the same occupations to which they had been applying themselves in the outside world. The real test came with the deprivation of food and sleep, therefore the struggle against natural desires—the fasting and vigils—was considered the greatest spiritual achievement and was attained only by a chosen few who were held in general

<sup>3</sup> The famous Syrian ascetic of the fifth century who was reputed to have spent many years on top of a pillar—ED.

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<sup>3</sup> The famous Syrian ascetic of the fifth century who was reputed to have spent many years on top of a pillar.—ED.

esteem. For the majority of the brethren the Abbot, though very strict, had to introduce a day-rest instead of a night-rest. At noon the gates of the monastery were closed and the brethren sank into sleep. In spite of this not many could endure the "stalwart standing" in church at night. According to the *Paterikon*, during one of these "standings" Brother Matthew, famed for clairvoyance, saw the devil dressed as a Pole walking in church and throwing flowers at the brethren. The one to whom a flower clung stood for awhile and then, weakening in spirit, would walk out of the church and into his cell to sleep. Brother Matthew always stood stalwartly to the end of the matins though even for him it was not easy, but once on leaving the church after the matins he was unable to reach his cell and sitting down under the wooden gong used for calling the brethren to church, he fell asleep.

The struggle was great for an ascetic resolved to overcome the temptations, for, only yesterday a pagan, he could not at once free himself of the old beliefs, and in his imagination the natural desires became snares laid for him by the evil force. The demons were to him ancient pagan deities, provoked at the young generation and resolved to avenge themselves for the betrayal of the old religion. In the words of one of the writers of the *Paterikon*, "the demons, worshiped and venerated by the pagans of old, intolerant of the insult, cried: 'O wicked enemies, we shall not be placated, we shall fight you unto death!'" Then the great struggle began. Night was the most favorable time for diabolic temptations, because the monk at this time was particularly weak, while the foe—in league with the desires of the flesh and the terrors of the night—was particularly strong. The ascetic, worn out with fatigue but resisting the desire to lie down "on the ribs," would occasionally sit and indulge in a nap. The demons, in the form of fierce dragons familiar to folklore, breathing fire and sparks, would appear before the ascetic, threatening to demolish the walls of his cell and pervading his solitude with shouts, roars of driving chariots, and the strains of diabolical music. Even to the fearless and sober Abbot Theodosius, during the early days of his monastic life, the devil appeared in the shape of a black dog that stood stubbornly before him preventing him from genuflecting until the holy one had courage to strike it, when the apparition vanished. From per-



sonal experience the Abbot was convinced that the best means of struggling against the night apparitions was the resistance to the terrors they inspired, and this advice he gave to the brethren. When Brother Hilarion, being pursued at night by the demons, came to Theodosius entreating that he be transferred to another cell, the Abbot administered him a severe reprimand, and the following night Hilarion "lay down in his cell and slept soundly." However, the struggle did not always end so easily. Thus Brother Isaac lost his mind after seeing one of these apparitions.

It required great effort to overcome the diabolic temptations and desires of the flesh, and on this struggle the most fervent of the ascetics spent their force. This initial step of spiritual effort had but a preparatory significance in the scale of Christian ascetic exercises, yet the most perfect of the Pechersky ascetics could not rise above it. The Kiev ascetics had no clear conception of the higher forms of active and contemplative asceticism, and that which should have been only the method—the liberation of the spirit from earthly aspirations and thoughts—by necessity became to the brethren of the Pechersky Monastery the sole object. Their undisciplined natures did not subject themselves easily to insistent and conscientious efforts. Men with the will power and common sense of the Pechersky Abbot succeeded, indeed, in attaining a sound spiritual balance, but in its establishment too great and important a part was assigned to the external discipline of the mind and will. Because of this discipline Russian ascetics became outstanding administrators, most needed at that time, rather than great torch bearers of Christian sentiment and thought.

Thought was assigned a very humble place at the Pechersky Monastery. We find in the monastic records that when either Brother Hilarion or Brother Nikon was employed in transcribing books, the Abbot sat beside him "spinning fleece" or preparing the thread for bookbinding. Diligent work on books was frowned upon by the brethren, for spiritual pride could easily result from knowledge. In one of the Pechersky legends the love of reading was represented characteristically as a means of diabolical temptation. To one of the brethren, Nikita the Anchorite, the devil appeared in the form of an angel and said: "Thou must not pray but read books; through them thou shalt hold communion with the Lord

so that thou canst give a helpful word to them who come to thee, while I shall pray continually for thy salvation." Thus tempted, the monk, trusting in the prayers of the alleged angel, ceased praying and applied himself only to study and reading. To those who came to him he spoke of the grace of the spirit and prophesied. Noticing that the learned brother knew the books of the Old Testament by heart, but did not want either to see the Gospel and the Epistles or listen to them, the brethren understood it as a sign that Nikita had been tempted by the devil. Then the ascetics gathered together, and after a general council drove away the devil from Nikita by such powerful means that all knowledge left him at once. Naturally, under the circumstances, there could be little scholarship or knowledge of the Scriptures among the Pechersky brethren.

The *Paterikon* says that only one man spoke Hebrew, Latin, and Greek, the languages so indispensable to a serious study of theology, but even he was possessed of an evil spirit and lost all learning when the devil was expelled from him.

There were limitations in the growth of piety at the Pechersky Monastery, and frequently it sank far below the level of asceticism. The habits and vices of the surrounding life broke through the monastic enclosure and the strict Studite rule,<sup>4</sup> which should have served as the norm of monastic life, became an ideal difficult of attainment. The mere observance of it appeared to the writers of the *Paterikon* as the highest degree of piety and asceticism. The carrying of wood and water, the baking of bread, and other similar tasks evoked special approbation in the *Paterikon*, whereas by the Studite rule all these were the regular duties of the Abbot and brethren.

One of the monks knew the Psalter by heart and thereby aroused the general admiration of the brethren, who forgot that the rule required this knowledge of each one of them. Far more significant, however, was the fact that the essential part of the rule, forbidding the monks to possess personal property, was not observed, and Theodosius had to enter their cells without warning and burn the superfluous clothes, foodstuffs and other property they were hiding there. After the death of Abbot Theodosius the personal prop-

<sup>4</sup> The rule was adopted from the Studium Monastery in Constantinople.

erty of the monks was openly recognized and they were even allowed to earn money outside, thus creating rich and poor, generous and avaricious monks. It became difficult for a poor man to be admitted to the monastery because without a monetary assignment he would not be accepted. From a statement in the *Paterikon* one learns that the brethren did not want even to bury a poor monk from whom no legacy was received. Thus the Greek rule proved an unbearable yoke to the outstanding Russian monastery even at the height of its existence. Unable to endure the rigid rules of monastic life, the monks escaped from the enclosure at night and only returned to the monastery after a thorough carousal, which sometimes lasted for many days. Theodosius had an extensive problem to face in striving against these absences; he had to shut his eyes to them and admit his prodigal children back into the monastery.

In the meantime, what was taking place in the world outside the monastic enclosure? Only a few confused records have reached us, but nevertheless they prove that among the laity it was a rare exception to find a conscious attitude towards the questions of ethics and religion. Men like Vladimir Monomakh,<sup>5</sup> who brought into harmony the claims of worldly morality and Christian ethics, were met with only at the top of Russian society, while the masses, contrary to Khomiakov's opinion, had not even assimilated the ritual, that is, the external manifestation of Christian life. We agree with Prof. E. E. Golubinsky that the mass of the population in ancient Russia of the pre-Mongol period had not the time to assimilate anything—either the external form, or the inner meaning of the Christian faith. The people, as before, remained pagan, and the proper exercise of Christian rites—church-going, the discharge of church ceremonies, and the partaking of the Holy Sacrament—were still questions for the future. It required almost the entire length of Russian history for the people to attain this stage. The Russian nature was so averse to the observance of the ritual that at the attempt to increase the days of fasting two Bishops, Nestor and Leon, in succession, lost their diocese in Rostov. They were expelled by Prince Andrew Bogolubsky and their parishioners in 1162 for opposing the resolution of the Russian party which

<sup>5</sup> Prince of Kiev, 1113-25 —ED.

abolished fasting on Wednesday and Friday when it coincided with a holiday.

Under the circumstances the immediate influence of the torch bearers of piety in the Pechersky Monastery upon the surrounding world was considerably smaller than that which the pious Kiev legend proved to have on posterity. Only upon the upper classes of their contemporary society could the monastic ascetics exert any influence but even there the monks resolutely observed the commandment, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's," and welcomed a prince "as befits a prince" and a boiarin "as befits a boiarin." When Abbot Theodosius interfered in the conflict between the princes and tried to persuade Prince Sviatoslav to give back to his elder brother the throne which he had illegally usurped, and in return the Prince threatened to banish him, the brethren entreated their superior to cease his pastoral admonitions. Sometimes the Prince would come to the monastery and listen to the edifying discourses, but if he ever was guided by the monastic advice in his private life his conscience alone could tell. The upper classes, however, did not turn to the monastery even for enlightenment, all they required of an Orthodox priest or monk was what they formerly received from the pagan magi.

The *Paterikon* recounts that one day the people from a village belonging to the monastery came and begged the Abbot to expel the house demon from the stall where he was wasting away the cattle. Pagan deities did not cease to exist for a Christian of those days; they were merely transformed into demons and the struggle against them became his immediate duty. So the Pechersky Abbot answered the villagers' call, went to the village, and mindful of the word of the Lord: "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting," spent the night in the stall in prayer until the break of day, and from that time on all the mischiefs of the house demon ceased.

Such was the condition of religious faith in Russia soon after the conversion, and having familiarized ourselves with the humble beginnings of Russian piety we must now turn to its further development.

## II

# NATIONALIZATION OF FAITH AND CHURCH

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IN the early period after the conversion Russian society was divided into two very unequal parts. A small group of people strove eagerly to reproduce in Russia the subtleties of Eastern religion, but the mass of the population, while Christian in name, remained pagan. For a long time two circumstances prevented them both from drawing closer and understanding each other. First, the new faith descended upon Russia with the traits of asceticism, and the Christian ideal it advanced was specifically monastic. This ascetic ideal was foreign and too exalted for the world, whereas the world was too unrighteous and fraught with peril for the ascetic ideal. The only means of safeguarding the purity of that ideal was to escape from the world, therefore monasticism became an indispensable requisite to Christian perfection and every true Christian yearned to retire from the worldly surroundings, which were contrary to his ideal. Second, notwithstanding a most sincere mutual desire to enlighten and be enlightened, it was a difficult task to accomplish. All this led to the dissociation of the laity and clergy. From the early days the Russians could have acquired knowledge of faith from the kindred Slavonic (Bulgarian) source, but until the period of the Mongol domination most of their metropolitans and bishops were Greeks sent from Constantinople and ignorant of the Russian language. Little by little this difficulty was overcome and the learned Greeks were replaced by Russian bishops competent to talk to the parishioners without interpreters, and able to expose their shortcomings in a style comprehensible to

all and not based on the principles of Byzantine rhetorics. Yet here a new difficulty presented itself: the Russian priests were little qualified to be teachers. Under these conditions centuries passed, but the spiritual education of the people gained ground very slowly, because the decline in the standard of the priests was more rapid than the rise in that of the masses. The decline in the cultural level and the lessening of piety in the upper clergy is a fact as generally acknowledged by the Russian historians of the church as it is easily explained. Turning away gradually from Byzantium and being deprived of the constant influx of the Greek spiritual force, Russia had not yet the educational means sufficient to replace the Greek priests with equally well-trained ones of her own. To a certain degree the zeal of native hierarchs towards the religious enlightenment of the masses could have replaced the lack of qualifications, but even zealous priests were scarce as the necessity for them increased. The difficulty in filling the high ecclesiastical offices was great, but the problem was far more acute as regards the lower clergy. As an example we shall quote the classic complaints of Genadius, the Novgorod Archbishop of the fifteenth century

They bring me a peasant to be ordained as a priest or deacon. I bid him read the Epistles, and he does not know how to begin. I bid him read the Psalter, he cannot take the first step. . . . I order him to be taught at least the liturgical prayers, but he is unable even to repeat the words one gives him. When told to read from the alphabet, after a short lesson he begs to leave, does not want to learn. And if I refuse to ordain him, I am told such is the world, your Holiness, we cannot find anyone versed in knowledge.

The same thing was confirmed a half-century later by the Council of a Hundred Chapters. "Unless the illiterates are ordained," say the statutes of the Council held in Moscow in 1551, "the churches will remain without chant and the Christians will die unrepentant."

The decline in the level of education among the clergy was a far more striking and noticeable phenomenon than the gradual advancement of the religious standard of the masses. This progress must be recognized as an indisputable fact, and to question it would be both an injustice and a grave error of judgment. Drawing closer to each other the priests and the parishioners of ancient

Russia arrived finally at a fairly analogous religious understanding—equally remote from both initial points: the ascetic fervor of the hermits and the pagan creed of the masses. The priests grew more and more accustomed to identifying the substance of religion with its outer forms, whereas the masses, having primarily not even assimilated the forms of religion, gradually grew to value them. By force of habit they attributed to the rites the same mysterious and magic significance found in earlier days in the rites of the ancient folk cult. It was the magic significance of the rite which became the cause and condition of its popularity. Therefore the rite served also as a middle course upon which met the upper and lower strata of Russian faith: the former gradually losing the true conception of the contents, the latter gradually gaining an approximate understanding of the form.

Some historians of the church have described the period from the ninth to the sixteenth century as one of continuous decline, when in fact it had been one of constant progress. During these six centuries pagan Russia was being transformed, little by little, into "Holy Russia," the country of innumerable churches, incessant chiming of bells, long night services, strict fastings, and zealous genuflections, as pictured by foreign visitors of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. It is interesting to note that the expression "Holy Russia" appeared for the first time in 1579 in the letters of Prince Kurbsky.

During that time, the alien product having become acclimatized in Russia, the faith acquired a national character. Of what did these national characteristics acquired by Christianity in Russia consist?

It would be futile to expect any explanation of the elements of these national traits from the Russian observers of those days, for they were as yet unable to recognize the difference between their faith and other creeds. As regards the foreign observers of that time the fact that the Russians addressed each other as "Christians" and "Orthodox," and called their church "Eastern" did not seem to them as being characteristic of Russian piety. They have recorded original traits in the Russian piety, but of course these observations vary in accordance with their own creed. Those coming from the West, particularly the Protestants, tried to find in the forms of Russian piety a corresponding inner meaning and, to

their complete bewilderment, often failed. Accustomed to regard the knowledge of the Gospel as an indispensable condition of faith, and the oral instruction as one of the principal duties of the pastors, they were dismayed to find that preaching did not exist in Russia, and that scarcely one out of ten inhabitants knew the Lord's Prayer, to say nothing of the Creed and the Ten Commandments. A foreigner once asked a Russian why the peasants did not know either the Lord's Prayer or the Ave Maria, and was told that "this very superior science was suitable only to Tsars, Patriarchs, clergy, and gentlefolk, and not to the plain people." In 1620 at the Upsal Academy John Botvid, a learned Swede, discussed a thesis on the subject "Are Muscovites Christians?" Though by means of various scientific conjectures and analogies he at last succeeded in answering the question affirmatively, the very fact that such a thesis could be debated is extremely characteristic.

At first sight the impressions produced by Russian piety upon visitors from the East, the land of ancient faith, seem quite different, as we find them recorded in the diary of Archdeacon Paul, who in the days of Patriarch Nikon came to Moscow with Macarius the Patriarch of Antioch. Notwithstanding their readiness to admire and be moved by everything, the eight-hour standing in church and the long fastings drove the unfortunate Syrians to despair "We grew quite weak during Lent," writes Deacon Paul, "and felt the agonies of torture." "In their endurance and steadfastness may the peace of God rest with the Russian people, its men, women, and children," Paul exclaims in another place, and then remarks half jokingly that "without question all the Russians will take their place with the saints, for their piety surpasses that of the hermits."

Although the Eastern Patriarch destined Russians to sainthood, and the Swedish theologian applied all the resources of his science to prove that they were not pagan, one must admit that fundamentally both opinions were based on fairly analogous observations. Indeed, Russian piety acquired a quality differing as much from the West as from the East, and in its substance the Russian faith became characteristically national. At the same time that the nationalization of Russian religion was achieved, the Russian



church also became national in its form. We shall now see how this was accomplished.

In a book published in 1913, M. D. Priselkov endeavored to prove that the first steps towards nationalization coincided with the conversion of the Russian people. In his opinion, Vladimir had received baptism not from the Greeks but the Bulgarians, and had subordinated his new diocese to the Patriarch of Ochride. However, this theory is based upon a number of conjectures, very clever, but extremely hypothetical. True, a struggle between the Russians and Greeks had taken place at an early date, but it had terminated in a Greek victory half a century following the conversion. The chronicles written under Greek influence point out that in 1030-37 "Russia was christened anew," and that the Greeks had succeeded in making "her people uphold the Christian faith and forget paganism." The Greeks did not believe in Boris, Gleb, and Vladimir, the first Russian saints of princely origin, and confronted the Russians with their own martyrs and saints. From the time of Iaroslav <sup>1</sup> the Russian church was definitely subordinated to the Patriarch of Constantinople and became one of his dioceses. Up to the Mongol invasion in the early part of the thirteenth century the highest ecclesiastical personage in Russia, the Metropolitan of Kiev, was appointed from Constantinople, and twice only, in 1051 and 1147, at the councils of Russian bishops in Kiev, did the Russians venture to consecrate their own metropolitans—Hilarion and Klim. In both instances Constantinople refused to sanction the nomination. "It is not within the statutes," argued the Greek bishops, "for the bishops to consecrate a metropolitan. The Patriarch must consecrate a metropolitan." Finally the Russians were forced to recognize the power of the Patriarch, which lasted until the time of the Mongol invasion, when the relations began to change. Simultaneously with the influx of the Mongols from Asia, Byzantium fell into the hands of the crusaders of the Fourth Crusade. In the midst of this confusion, both in Russia and on the Balkan peninsula, Russian metropolitans were more frequently consecrated at home and went to Constantinople only for confirmation. Thus it continued for two hundred years, up to the middle of the fifteenth century, when

<sup>1</sup> Prince of Kiev, 1019-54 —Ed

alarming news came from Constantinople. In 1437 Metropolitan Isidorus, a Greek and staunch supporter of the union of churches, was sent to Moscow as a successor to Photius, also a Greek. For the first time the misgivings of the Muscovites were aroused when Isidorus announced to the Grand Duke his intention of going to Italy for the Latin Ecclesiastical Council in Florence. The Russians had been earlier taught by Byzantium to hate the Western church. According to the instructions of the Eastern church one could neither eat nor drink from the same vessel as the Latins. Therefore it was quite natural that the intention of Metropolitan Isidorus to go to Italy seemed to the people of Moscow "new, and strange, and unpleasant." Notwithstanding the Grand Duke's attempts to dissuade him, Isidorus went to the Council and returned from Florence with a Latin cross and a prayer for the Pope instead of one for the Patriarch—in short, the union of the Eastern and the Western church. This the Russians could not tolerate, and so the humanist Metropolitan was declared a "maleficent, crafty, and mercenary man," arrested and condemned by the council of Russian ecclesiastics, but succeeded in escaping to Rome. In his place the same council elected its own Metropolitan—Jonah, a Russian, long a candidate of the Grand Duke Vasily. They also wrote an explanatory letter to Byzantium, in which the Grand Duke requested permission to consecrate the metropolitans in Russia.

This request was explained as due to the length of the journey, the unserviceable roads to Byzantium, and the Turkish invasion, but between the lines could be read quite plainly its principal reason—the newborn dissension in the heart of the Eastern church. The Moscow government was so greatly troubled by the acceptance of the Union in Constantinople that it dared not appeal to the Patriarch, and so under the ambiguous pretext that Russia did not know whether the most holy Patriarch was still in the capital the letter was addressed to Emperor Constantine Paleologus. In a letter sent to Kiev not later than the end of January 1451 Jonah already connected the "dissensions" of the Emperors and the Patriarch with the subjugation of Constantinople by the Turks and Latins.

Constantine Paleologus had no opportunity to answer the Grand Duke's letter, for on May 29, 1453, he was killed on the ramparts of Constantinople. In less than fifteen years following the "great

crime" committed by the Greek church—the acceptance of the Union—Moscow received even more terrifying news. "Ye children of mine," Metropolitan Jonah wrote in his circular message a year after the Turkish conquest of Constantinople, "a man, a Christian Orthodox, by name of Demetrius the Greek, came to us from the great Orthodoxy, from the great ruling city of Constantine and told us that, by the will of God and in punishment for our sins, the city of Constantine, for so many years impregnable and defended by God, had been taken by the godless Turks—its holy churches and monasteries ruined and the sacred relics burned. The hermits, the monks, and the nuns, together with the entire Greek race, were destroyed—the aged by fire and sword, the young and the infants taken into captivity." The Russians saw in this a punishment from God which had suddenly struck the Greeks for their backsliding to Latinism. "You well know, my children, the many ills that befell the ruling city of Constantine during the seven years the Bulgarians and Persians held it as in a net; yet it did not suffer as long as the Greeks observed their faith," ran another message in which five years later Jonah again revealed his ideas.

Once more the inference was clear: the Russians had to take care of their souls. "At the time when Isidorus returned from the Council," the Grand Duke wrote to the Emperor just prior to the fateful event, "we began to attach importance to our Orthodoxy, our immortal souls, the hour of our death, and our appearance at the great Day of Judgment before the Judge of all our innermost thoughts." Thus a tremendous responsibility fell upon the representatives of the Russian church, for the fate of Orthodoxy throughout the world depended on them, since at the center of Orthodoxy in the ruling city "the sun of piety was eclipsed." This idea led to the unfolding of the famous theory of the part played by the state of Moscow in universal history—"Moscow, the Third Rome." Already at the end of the fifteenth century we find this theory fully developed in the letters of Philotheus, the Abbot of a Pskov monastery. "The church of ancient Rome fell because of Apollinarian heresy," he wrote to Ivan III; "as to the second Rome—the church of Constantinople—it has been hewn by the axes of Ishmaelites, but this third new Rome—the Holy Apostolic church, under thy mighty rule, shines throughout the entire world more

brightly than the sun. All the Orthodox Christian realms have converged in thine own. Thou art the sole Autocrat of the universe, the only Tsar of the Christians. . . . Observe and hearken, O pious Tsar," Philotheus continued in his letter, "two Romes have fallen, but the third stands, and no fourth can ever be. Thy Christian Empire shall fall to no one's lot." Thus the Russian Tsar had to uphold the sole remaining fragment of true Orthodoxy inviolate until the second advent of Christ.

This theory was to prove a valuable means in the attainment of the early aspirations of the Russian church—its national independence.

One hundred years later the Moscow authorities finally obtained for the North Russian church its formal independence from Byzantium and its own Patriarch (1589), while the theory of Moscow's world importance at that time had already been officially adopted. In the charter confirming the new Moscow Patriarchate the theory of "Moscow, the Third Rome" was once more proclaimed. In fact, even before the establishment of the Patriarchate the Russian church was no longer a dependent of the church of Constantinople; yet to prove the claims to its complete independence another theory had to be introduced. During the pre-Mongol and the Appanage periods<sup>2</sup> the Russian church was satisfied with its Greek origin and even prided itself on it, but to the national church it seemed necessary to trace Russian Christianity in a direct line from the Apostles. As the Russian Grand Duke had his origin directly from Pruss, "the brother of Emperor Augustus," so the Russian faith should proceed directly from Andrew, "brother of the Apostle Peter." Thus, when the Papal Legate Possevin tried to persuade Ivan the Terrible to embrace the Florentine Union, the Tsar answered:

Why do you point out the Greeks to us, Greeks are no Gospel to us, we believe not in the Greeks but in Christ. We received the Christian faith at the birth of the Christian church when Andrew, brother of the Apostle Peter, came to these parts on his way to Rome. Thus we in Moscow embraced the true faith at the same time that you did in Italy, and have kept it inviolate from then to the present day.

<sup>2</sup> The term "Appanage period" has been commonly applied by Russian historians to the period from the middle of the thirteenth to the middle of the fifteenth century, during which Russia remained divided into a large number of small independent principalities ("appanages") —Ed

It was through the assistance of the state working in the interest of the Grand Duke of Moscow during the century before the establishment of the Patriarchate that the Russian church became morally and spiritually emancipated from Byzantium, for its national elevation was as much a political as a spiritual matter, in fact more political than spiritual. By means of the Moscow theory, in which the "one Orthodox Tsar of the Universe" was exalted above all others, the Moscow sovereign obtained a religious consecration strengthening thereby the growth of his power. Naturally the princes of Moscow promptly availed themselves of this new weapon to fight their adversaries and to establish definitely the autocracy.

In return for its protection by the state, the national Russian church rendered equivalent services. By recognizing the supremacy of the state and gaining a place within the system of Moscow state institutions, it became not only a national but a state church as well. We shall now examine carefully this new trait which played such an important part in the history of the Russian church.

It was Byzantium that had paved the way for one of the most characteristic traits of Russian church history, the close relation of state and church. According to the Fathers of the Quinisext Ecumenical Council the Lord entrusted the church to the Emperor, and Balsamon, the canonist of the twelfth century, acknowledged his power as being greater than that of the Patriarch. The Emperor of Byzantium, the "Prelate for External Affairs," as Constantine the Great called himself, actually possessed tremendous power over the church. "Saint" and "Lord of the Christian World" were introduced into the title of the emperor. He could enter the sanctuary, bless the people, and participate in divine service. True that at times the emperors' claims met with resistance, and the Eastern as well as the Western theory held that "Prelacy was above the State," or in other words, the ecclesiastical power was above the secular power. However, this did not prevent the Byzantine emperors, as official representatives and defenders of its interests, from constant and actual interference in the matters of the church. They extended their power over the Eastern church to its Russian dioceses, redistributing them, taking part in the appointment of Russian metropolitans and the prosecution of guilty hierarchs, etc. More-

over, they claimed a supremacy in Russia's secular affairs, and regarded the Russian princes as vassals.

At the end of the fourteenth century the Grand Duke of Moscow, realizing his power, followed the example of the South Slavonic sovereigns and protested against subordination to the Emperor of Byzantium by stating to the Patriarch "We have a church, but we have no tsar, and do not wish one." Then he forbade mentioning the Emperor's name in prayer, which provoked a severe reprimand from the Patriarch of Constantinople.

It is inconceivable for a Christian [the Patriarch wrote to Vasily I in 1393] to have a church and not have a tsar, for the state and the church are closely united, and it would be impossible to separate them one from the other. . . . The Holy Tsar occupies a high position in the church, the Emperor of Byzantium is not like other local princes and sovereigns. From the very beginning the Tsars have strengthened and sanctioned the piety of the whole world. The Tsars have convoked Ecumenical Councils, they have, in their statutes, enjoined the observation of holy dogmas and the principles of Christian life, and fought against all heresies. . . . All of which entitles them to great honor and a high position in the church . . . Listen to what the Apostle Peter said "Fear the Lord, revere the Tsar." The Apostle did not say "Tsars," for this might have suggested *the so-called Tsars* of the various nations<sup>3</sup> but "Tsar," indicating *one* Tsar in the world. . . . All the others have by force appropriated to themselves the name of Tsar.

The grandson and great-grandson of Prince Vasily I profited fully by the lesson of the Byzantine Patriarch. Indeed, it was necessary to recognize the authority of "*one* Tsar in the world" over the Christian church, and after the fall of Constantinople and the Balkan states the sovereign of Moscow became this Tsar.

Through his marriage to Sophia Paleologus, Ivan III became the heir to "Caesaropapism" of the Byzantine Emperors. Thus simultaneously the Russian church declared its independence from the Patriarch of Constantinople, and the Russian Tsars<sup>4</sup> became its

<sup>3</sup> The Patriarch referred to the Serbs and Bulgarians

<sup>4</sup> The word "Tsar," a contraction of Caesar, was used in the ninth century by the Southern Slavs and came from there to Russia. During the thirteenth century the Khans, the Shahs, and the Sultans were called "Tsars" in Russia and only in the fifteenth century did the South Slavonic sovereigns assume this title. It was

representatives and heads—although their claims were not as far-reaching as those of the Byzantine Emperors.

The power of the Tsar and the abstract theory upon which it was established were not sufficient to realize the new conception of the national Russian church. For this an active cooperation of the church itself was required, and it was offered to the government of Moscow by three eminent hierarchs of the sixteenth century, Joseph Sanin, the Abbot of Volokolamsk Monastery, and the two Metropolitans, Daniel and Macarius, all three imbued with a nationally religious spirit. The representatives of three generations, they flourished between the end of the fifteenth and the middle of the sixteenth centuries, and in their work they championed the idea which had originated at the beginning of this period and was realized at the end of it—the idea of a national state church.

Joseph, Daniel, and Macarius, with their ardent devotion to form, letter, and ritual, represented a trend which was intolerant of a critical attitude towards tradition, and they were typical of the Russian culture and piety of the sixteenth century. "The origin of all passions is in *opinion*, opinion is the second fall of man." Thus did one of his disciples formulate Joseph's views. This dread of the "accursed" opinion, this fear of expressing an individual thought, permeated the literary activities of Joseph, Daniel, and Macarius, the eminent writers of the sixteenth century. As everything a writer stated had to be quoted "from the books" literary work became a collection of extracts from "Holy Scriptures." In Joseph's works there usually is a central idea, and he employs dialectic skill in interspersing the extracts with his own reasonings. Daniel in his sermons and letters contributed only some introductory remarks and a conclusive moral, often having no relation to the principal subject. "The bulk of his work," says a modern student of Daniel's writing, "consists of a confused mass of extracts, in comparison to which the personal work of the author is only that of a copyist." As

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in the seventies and eighties of the fifteenth century that the word "Tsar" was associated with the title of the Prince of Moscow, first in his relations with the Livonian Order and the cities of Narva, Reval, and Lubeck, and then, in 1504-14-17, with the Germanic Emperor. The religious sanction "By the Grace of God," also of Byzantine origin, antedates the adoption of this title. It occasionally appeared on the coins of Vasily I (1389-1425) and on all those of Vasily II. These words also appeared on the seals after 1497.

for Macarius, he planned and achieved the task of compiling his famous *Menologion*, a complete encyclopedia of ancient Russian literature: "All the holy books which can be found in Russia."

Because of the lack of original thought in these works it was necessary to possess a colossal memory and to be a man of erudition in order to have "on the tip of the tongue," as one of Joseph's biographers expressed it, the greatest possible number of scriptural texts upon every subject. In the absence of a proper scientific training and critical methods this erudition degenerated in Russia into a mere knowledge of texts. Even to Joseph and Daniel there existed no difference in the books they read. The Gospel, the Lives of the Saints, the Bible, the Apostles, and the statutes of the Byzantine Emperors were all under one rubric and were considered "Holy Scriptures." However, in none of this did the Russian hierarchs of the sixteenth century recognize the core of Christianity. The "Scriptures" served only as a means of regulating life, and to this practical purpose all their cares were directed. Although poor men of letters, they revealed themselves as skilfully practical and expert in their knowledge of worldly wisdom.

With this aim Joseph, the founder of the movement, built the famous Volokolamsk Monastery, which for a century was a "nursery" of bishops. The monastic rule subjugated the monks' tempers, effaced their individual traits, trained them to be docile and complaisant. The brethren were rigidly taught formal discipline and formal piety; they pledged themselves to have no personal possessions and were under complete obedience to the rule, the Abbot, and to each other. All this produced men ready to support and propagate the ideas of the founder. Wherever fate took them the graduates of the Volokolamsk Monastery did not sever their connection with their alma mater, but supported each other and brought men of their trend to the highest positions in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, thus preserving the tradition from generation to generation. Daniel succeeded Joseph as Abbot and later attained the Metropolitan See, while Macarius, whom he promoted, subsequently became his successor. More than half a century after the death of Joseph the term "Josephites" still held a definite meaning, commanding the veneration of friends and the hatred of enemies.

The chief purpose of Joseph and his followers, the Josephites, was



to establish a close union between church and state, and they strove to support the state authority, hoping to obtain in return its protection. Joseph was prepared to regard the triumph of the state authority at Moscow as that of the church, and in every possible way contributed to it. Metropolitan Daniel continued to uphold the Josephite policy, which can be seen from the part he took in the arrest, at Moscow, of one of the last appanage princes, and in the solution of the question of divorce between Vasily III and the childless Salome Saburov. By his authority the Metropolitan pardoned, in the first case, the violation of the oath and, in the second case, the breach of church rules, thus exercising that "Godly wise and God-inspired cunning" which, as a principle of the highest worldly wisdom, Joseph had bequeathed to his followers.

Of course, in return for this the church expected equivalent services from the government. By raising no objections to the Prince's interference with church matters, but even allowing it ample scope, Joseph procured the support of the state in what was to him and the church the most pressing question of the day: the question of monastic property. He regarded the monastery as a state institution whose aim it was to prepare hierarchs for the state church.

With this in view Joseph was very discriminating in his choice of those to be admitted into his monastery and preferred to have rich and illustrious men able to make generous assignments of money and land. His reasons were entirely practical: the monastery had to be rich to attract people of prominence, and it was necessary to have prominent men in order to prepare worthy successors for the highest stations in the administration of the church. There was a moment when the monastic estates were in great peril of secularization, but Joseph's party offered to make concessions to the state on the question of church independence, which proved effective. The government met them halfway, and the secularization of monastic estates was postponed for several centuries, whereas the Josephites applied every effort to make the church a state and national one. Theoretically Joseph placed the Russian prince in the same position which the Emperor of Byzantium had occupied in the Eastern church. Daniel practically subordinated the church and its representatives to the will of the secular power. Finally, Macarius applied the theory and practice of secular intervention to the revision

of the spiritual heritage of the national church, and in this sense completed the task begun by the first Abbot of Volokolamsk. The peak of Josephite policy was reached in the ecclesiastical councils during the first years of the independent reign of Ivan the Terrible. We shall now examine the period of national self-determination and exaltation of the Russian church.

Foreign observers have recorded the interesting information that every pious Russian of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries liked to say his prayers in church before his own icon, and that if he was temporarily excluded from communion, his icon was also removed from church. That custom spread from individuals to entire districts, the dwellers of which enjoyed the possession of their own relics, their own icons, and their own patron saints. When the relics of St. Leontius, the first saint of that region, were discovered in Rostov, Prince Andrew Bogoliubsky, unable to disguise his gratification and joy, exclaimed: "Now I no longer stand humiliated in the eyes of other countries." The local saints were revered only within the boundaries of their own land, while other districts either ignored them or regarded them with enmity.

At the time of Russia's unification it was necessary to change this particularistic point of view on local relics. In annexing the appanages the Princes of Moscow<sup>5</sup> transferred the most sacred of these relics to the newly established capital. Thus the icon of the Saviour from Novgorod, the icon of the Annunciation from Ustiug, the icon of Our Lady Odigitria from Smolensk, and the Pechersky icon from Pskov found their way to the Cathedral of the Assumption in Moscow. On becoming the head of the national church, the sovereign of Moscow began to collect systematically all the national relics. The idea was not to deprive the conquered districts of their patron saints, but in accordance with the wish of the national church to obtain for local relics a general renown and to add them to the common depository of national piety. "It was necessary," stated a writer of one of the lives of the saints, "to prove that the Russian church, though it appeared at the eleventh hour,

<sup>5</sup> In the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries most of central and northern Russia gradually became united under the political authority of the Prince of Moscow, who became first the Grand Duke of Moscow, elevated over all appanage princes, and ultimately the Tsar of Russia.—Ed.

had accomplished as much as the laborers in the vineyard of the Lord who had toiled from the first hour, and that its seeds did not fall on thorns and rocks but on good, fertile ground bringing forth the harvest a hundredfold." Such were the motives that prompted Metropolitan Macarius to compile the lives of the saints who had existed prior to his time. But the *Menologion* was only a prologue to a more important task, "the equal of which," according to a modern student of Russian hagiography, "cannot be found either in the Russian church or in the Eastern and Western churches." The object of this work was to make known to the people all the local saints and to have them recognized and venerated as all-Russian saints.

In 1547, the first year of the independent reign of Ivan the Terrible, an ecclesiastical council was convoked in Moscow for the purpose of canonizing twenty-two local saints, about whom Macarius had collected the necessary information. However, he did not limit himself to this, but requested all the bishops to inquire further of the local clergy and pious people where and what saints had been glorified by signs and miracles. The results of their inquiries were written down and, in the form of the "Lives of New Saints," were presented in 1549 at the Second Ecclesiastical Council, adding seventeen saints to the former communion. Thus "in two or three years," to quote V. Vasiliev, "they canonized more saints than in all the preceding five centuries, from the foundation of the Russian church to the time of the councils."

The national pride was now quite satisfied. One of the transcribers of the "Lives" rightfully said that "from the time of the Councils on the New Saints, convoked in Moscow, the churches of the Lord in Russia were not bereft of the holy relics, and Russia truly radiated piety like the Second Rome, the ruling city (i. e., Constantinople)." These words show the close relation existing between the canonization of the saints and the establishment of the theory "Moscow, the Third Rome." The writer concluded by connecting the old to the new argument. "There the Orthodox faith was corrupted by the Moslem heresy of the godless Turks, whereas on Russian soil it began to glow with the teachings of *our* Holy Fathers." In using for the first part of his antithesis the fall of Constantinople and for the second the resolutions of the Moscow

Councils, the author of the quotation deliberately combined into a single whole both the beginning and the end of the process which we have been examining.

If in the beginning the Moscow churchmen felt somewhat appalled by the magnitude of the task which had fallen to their lot, now, after the work of the Councils, this task no longer appeared beyond their strength and they became confident of success. Having been eclipsed in Constantinople, "the sun of Orthodoxy radiated" with a new force in the new Russian capital, and fear for the destiny of the true faith had no foundation. In every essential the work of the Josephites was accomplished. The Council of a Hundred Chapters (1551), which concluded a series of ecclesiastical conventions for the revision and elevation of the spiritual substance in the national church, was their last and final victory.

It could not be said that the victory was attained without any opposition. On the contrary, there developed a strong center of opposition in the upper Transvolga region, not far from the Cyril-Belozersky Monastery. This party supplied a worthy opponent to each of the three main representatives of Josephism.

The holy Nilus, about the same age as Joseph of Volokolamsk, was the founder of the Sorsk Hermitage in the Transvolga region. It was from there that his followers—Bassianus the Squint-eyed, the opponent of Daniel, and Arthemius, with whom Macarius had to contend—came to continue his work. During the first half of the century, as long as any hope existed of overcoming the predominating influence of the Josephites, the voices of the Transvolga "Elders" and their disciples rose incessantly in opposition, and were silenced only after the final victory of the national religious party in the middle of the sixteenth century.

The views of Nilus of Sorsk and his followers were altogether contrary to those of the Abbot of Volokolamsk. In contradiction to the pedantic erudition of the Josephites, they declared in the Transvolga region that not every written scrap of paper was Holy Scripture—that "much was written, but not everything was holy: some of it was the Lord's commandment, some, a tradition of the Fathers, and some, human custom." The Scriptures, in their opinion, should be "scrutinized," referred to critically, and only the Gospel and the Epistles should be accepted unconditionally. In opposition to the

union of the church and state, the Transvolga Elders demanded their complete separation and mutual independence. It was of no avail for the Prince to seek counsel of the monks, those "ghosts" dead to the world, but neither should the church "stand in awe of the authority", it was pledged to uphold the truth, for "prelacy was above any state," and a secular sovereign could not judge of spiritual questions. They were those of individual conscience, therefore a secular power could not punish for the holding of religious beliefs. In contrast to the Josephites, who invoked the Holy Inquisition and insisted upon the execution of heretics, Nilus asserted that "to judge either the just or the culpable and to banish or incarcerate them was no concern of the church; it should only try to influence with persuasion and prayer."

The ethical teachings of the Transvolga Elders were also imbued with the spirit of inner Christianity. Neither the magnificence of the church, nor the priceless sacerdotal vestments and icons, nor the harmony of the chant form the substance of religion, but the inner regulation of the soul, "work of the spirit." The Christian ascetics must not live at the expense of other people, but have to subsist by their own labor. Therefore the monasteries cannot own property, the monks must be "non-covetous," and their possessions, in accordance with the commandment in the Gospel, should be distributed among the poor. Neither did the Transvolga Elders believe in the "new saints" canonized by the ecclesiastical councils of 1547-49.

For Russia of the sixteenth century all these views, even in their most temperate form, were too premature. The ideas of criticism, tolerance, and inner spiritual Christianity were beyond the understanding of its people. This alone was enough to doom the movement of the "Non-covetous" to failure, but what still further weakened their position and decided their fate was the compromising relation with heretics of the rationalist trend and a close association with the political opponents of the government. Nilus of Sorsk did not live to see the outcome of the struggle and died in peace. But Bassianus, notwithstanding his noble descent from the family of the Princes Patrikeiev and his relationship with the grand ducal house, was condemned by the ecclesiastical council under the chairmanship of Daniel as a heretic, delivered into the

hands of his bitter enemies the Josephites, and placed in their monastery for incarceration. Finally, soon after the Council of a Hundred Chapters, Arthemius, together with several others, was also condemned for heresy and banished to Solovetsk, whence he escaped into Lithuania, and having moderated his latitudinarianism became an ardent defender of Orthodoxy against Protestantism and Catholicism.

In 1553 and 1554, the Ecclesiastical Councils against the Heretics completed the work initiated by the Council of a Hundred Chapters and the Councils on New Saints. The last two Councils defined what the faith of the Russian national church should be, while the Councils against the Heretics decided what it ought not to be.

Positively, as well as negatively, the substance of the national Russian church was now conclusively determined and officially sanctioned.

### III

## THE ORIGIN OF THE SCHISM

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TOWARDS the end of the sixteenth century the Russian church became national in substance as well as in form. Russian piety was recognized as the purest in the world, and the subordination of the Russian church to the Patriarch of Constantinople ceased with the establishment of an independent Russian Patriarchate. The church attained both these results by forming a close union with the state. The state authorities recognized the inviolability of the spiritual substance in the Russian church and took upon themselves to safeguard it, while the representatives of the clergy gave religious sanction to the power of the Moscow sovereign and, in theory, acknowledged for the state its right and duty of guardianship over the church. The middle of the sixteenth century was a solemn moment of national exaltation for the state and the church, for their harmony seemed complete, and their union an everlasting one. While putting their program into practice, Tsar Ivan IV and Metropolitan Macarius could not foresee that the time would soon come when both state and church would find this union too close and inconvenient. In sanctioning the old ritual of the Russian church, the state did not anticipate that, in less than a century, it would be called to contend against a tradition it had itself strengthened in the conscience of the people. Neither did it ever occur to Joseph of Volokolamsk and his followers that their theory of state protection for the church would lead eventually to the complete abolition of secular privileges of the church and its incorporation into the framework of governmental institutions. Nevertheless, both results were the natural outcome of the fundamental cause—the low standard of religious thought in ancient

Russia. The recognition of this standard as immutable and infallible must necessarily have led to schism. It was likewise inevitable that because of the weakness in the spiritual life the state's protection of the church would gradually develop into a state control over the church.

The formalism of the old Russian religion was the cardinal trait characterizing both the Schism and the national church of the sixteenth century. The total absence of an indispensable preparatory knowledge prevented the Russians from discerning the substance of faith. What "Elder" Arsenius, a reviser of church books, said about his opponents in the beginning of the seventeenth century could be applied to the great majority of Russian churchmen of the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries: they were

scarcely qualified in the alphabet, and were not certain which letter was a vowel and which a consonant, and as to the parts of speech—the voice, the genders, singular and plural, tense, and person—these did not even enter their minds. Having had no training these people always dwell on one line, or even one word, and declare: it is written here thus. Then it proves to be something quite different. One must not concentrate alone on the letter, but on the meaning intended by the author as well. In fact, they have no knowledge of Orthodoxy, and in the Holy Scripture they see only the writing without trying to grasp the idea.

Under such conditions a single letter or a dot could prove an "obstacle" to the entire theology of an ancient Russian. Religion became to him a set form of prayer formulas, possessing a magic meaning, and the slightest detail, eliminated or changed, deprived the formula of that mysterious force in which he believed without questioning its origin. Long before the Schism this attitude was perfectly characterized by an ingenuous Novgorod chronicler of the fifteenth century. Under the year 1476 he recorded the following important event: "In the year 6984 some philosophers began to chant: 'O God! have mercy upon us'; while the rest of the people chanted: 'God, have mercy upon us'." Evidently the "philosophers" knew of the Greek vocative case and thought with its assistance to improve the Russian form. The complete substance of the coming Schism can be seen in this conflict of the two vocative cases. In comparing the Greek correction introduced by the "philosophers"



to the established form, the Novgorod chronicler was undecided which one to uphold, and yet at the time he was recording his doubts, the Russian churchmen had already obtained a criterion which gave preference to the Russian practice over the Greek theory.

The Greeks digressed from pure Orthodoxy, while the Russians from the early days of the Fathers observed it sacredly; therefore in the presence of differences in church forms and rites, the preference should be given the national Russian forms, as being truly Orthodox. Moreover, since there arose a doubt about the purity of the Greek faith, these differences acquired a special significance, for they proved definitely that Greek Orthodoxy was corrupt, and that of Russia sound. The greatest and most important task of Russian piety was now to safeguard carefully everything which did not resemble that of the Greeks.

Taking all this in consideration we shall be able to understand why the differences in church practice, trifling though they may be, became the object of special attention. The grandfathers and great-grandfathers, while noticing these peculiarities, tried to justify them by saying, "So it is done in the Greek Church," but the grandchildren and great-grandchildren, on the contrary, saw the best proof of the righteousness of their national religious peculiarities in that the latinized and moslemized Greek Church "no longer does it." They now tried zealously to discover and reveal in the distinction of form a distinction of spirit. If the Greeks did not hold two fingers in making the sign of the cross, or did thrice the hallelujah, then it showed that they had no true belief in the dogma of the Holy Trinity and understood erroneously the relation between the divine and human substance of Christ. If in ecclesiastical processions they walked against the sun, then obviously they refused to follow in the footsteps of Christ, thus treading on hell, the world of eternal gloom.

What was the attitude of the secular and clerical authorities of the sixteenth century towards these Russian ideas, which a hundred years later were to be condemned as schismatic? It is now generally established that the authorities treated the preservation of these ancient peculiarities of the national church with sympathy and encouragement, thereby hallowing them in the eyes of the

masses. In one of his sermons Metropolitan Daniel taught the people to hold two fingers in making the sign of the cross, and in another he took up arms against the shaving of the beard as an "outrage to the image of God." In the *Nomocanon*, compiled with the assistance of Daniel, there was inserted for that purpose an imaginary rule of the holy Apostles: "If one who shaved his beard died, he should not be given burial . . . but placed among the infidels." The Council of a Hundred Chapters, which crowned the triumph of the Josephite party, solemnly avowed these ideas and raised them to the degree of dogmas. "He who did not hold two fingers in making the sign of the cross—be he damned," proclaimed the Council, adding, "It was thus decreed by the Holy Fathers." Likewise, to do thrice the hallelujah and to shave the beards, the Council decided, "was not traditionally Orthodox, but Latin heresy."

However, the entire substance of the Josephite teachings, and in particular their ideas on the impeccability of Russian piety, met with some opposition. In 1518 Maximus, a learned Greek educated in Italy, came to Moscow. Being a Greek, he considered as illegal the independence of the Russian church from the Patriarch of Constantinople. As a man of culture and a scholar, he could not fail to notice the many deficiencies existing in Russian piety. "You embrace holy baptism and abide by the Orthodox faith—upright and sacred—but it bears no salutary fruit," courageously Maximus told the Council assembled for his trial. Naturally, in the struggle of the various parties in Moscow, Maximus could not be in favor of the Russian nationalists of those days. He soon gained friends among the followers of Nilus of Sorsk, straining thereby his relations with the Josephites and incurring the personal anger of Metropolitan Daniel. Then, in undertaking, by the order of the Grand Duke, the work of correcting the Russian theological books, he touched the sorest spot in the national piety. His closest collaborators felt a "great tremor" when Maximus bade them cross out a word or a whole paragraph of an ancient prayer formula. Not only his enemies but his followers as well were unable to understand that it was the form alone he was changing. For them the form contained the force and efficacy of the rite. His enemies considered the use of a newly corrected form a blasphemy, and his supporters en-

deavored to persuade him that the force of the old Russian rite was corroborated by facts; by means of it the ancient Russian saints had attained salvation! In contradiction to this, Bassianus, a follower of Nilus of Sorsk, affirmed with conviction that the ancient, uncorrected books "were written by the devil and not by the Holy Ghost." "Before Maximus," he said, "we were blaspheming God with these books instead of glorifying Him. But now, through Maximus, we perceive God." Ascribing to the learned Greek the exaggerated view expressed by his disciples, his opponents became indignant. "Thou, man, dost vex us when thou opposest the saints with thy reforms. They pleased the Lord with these books, lived according to their tenets, shed glory on our land, and after death became renowned for their miracles." In vain did Maximus argue that it was possible to worship the Russian saints without regarding them as learned philologists; that to judge his reforms it was necessary to know "the book wisdom" of the Greek teaching; that the "Hellenic language was most intricate," and that it was only possible to master it "by spending many years with learned teachers"; that even a native Greek could not know the language perfectly without having studied it at school. These arguments could not affect the views of the people, to whom any wisdom inaccessible to them was a witchery, and the temptation of the devil. Metropolitan Daniel accused Maximus of having attempted to bewitch the Grand Duke by extending over him his hands, on the palms of which were written Hellenic magical signs. "Thou braggest of Hellenic and Judaic sapience," the accusers responded to the explanations of Maximus, "of magic artifices and necromantic sorcery, all of which is contrary to Christian life and faith, and no Christian should penetrate their depths."

There was a great distinction between the conception of the world as understood by a pupil of cultured Europe, and those who represented semi-pagan Russia. When brought together by chance, these people of different worlds had no common language, and could not possibly understand each other. Finally, feeling himself a stranger in the community, Maximus asked permission to return to the Holy Mountain, but was held in Moscow. "We are in fear," a friend explained to him the cause of his detention; "thou a man of learning, comest to us and hast seen here of our best and worst,

and when thou goest hence thou wilt tell of everything." Notwithstanding Maximus' protestations that he was not subordinate to the Russian but only to the Greek authorities, he could not return to his native land. He was twice brought to trial, and though he fought to convince the judges by presenting arguments within their understanding, he was twice condemned under charges as absurd as those heretofore mentioned. After the second trial, like Bassianus he was handed over to his enemies in the Volokolamsk Monastery and subsequently transferred to the Otroch Monastery in Tver for incarceration. He lived to learn of the victory of his enemies at the Council of a Hundred Chapters.

This victory, however, was destined not to be a final one. In order to understand the historical change which transformed the Josephites of the sixteenth century into the Schismatics of the seventeenth, we must transpose the history of book revision by Maximus the Greek a century later, and interchange the parts. Let Maximus the accused be the accuser, and the accuser Daniel, together with the half-read and wholly illiterate masses of which he was so typical a representative, be the prisoner at the bar. Then replace Maximus by Nikon, far better suited to be the accuser, and the triumphant Daniel by the imprisoned Archpriest Avvakum of Iuriev infinitely more adapted to the part of a martyr to conviction. The accused and the accusers have changed places.

But what was happening in the interim? Was the vast majority of adherents to the national church, which defended the basic principles of the Josephites, converted into a minority forced to retreat before the followers of Maximus? No, it still remained a majority. The masses were not conscious of the changes which had been achieved during the century, and therefore were taken aback by the results. An ecclesiastical school where it was possible to study classical languages and grammar was opened in far-away Kiev. Several graduates of this school went to Moscow and were admitted to the only state printing house of those days as editors of sacred books. In their official capacity they compared the manuscripts with the printed texts of published works, and found the latter unsatisfactory, and the former abounding in variants and contradictions. The only means for establishing a correct and uniform text was to compare these works to the original Greek manuscripts,

therefore they sent for Greeks and their manuscripts. In collating the Greek and the Russian texts they found in the Russian books, besides the errors in translation and transcription, many original interpolations conforming to the national ritualistic peculiarities which in the sixteenth century were acknowledged as being from time immemorial the attributes of ancient Orthodoxy. But when compared to the Greek texts, these interpolations proved of recent date, and it was decided to delete them from the text. It was a simple and natural conclusion, but acutely contrary to the current national theory, and the first to come to it became victims of a controversy. In fact, what significance could the voices of a few specialists from Kiev have as against the voice of the entire church? The South Russian church, it was said in Moscow, had, like the Greek church, accepted the Union, and in the Kiev Theological Academy, long suspected of Latinism, they taught from Latin books. The ecclesiastical authorities interdicted the Kievan ecclesiastics from having any communion with the Orthodox without submitting themselves to a preliminary "purification," and under the threat of civil penalty and the anathema of the church it was forbidden in Moscow to buy books printed in Kiev. Because of the Russian opinion of the Greeks, the authority of the Greek manuscripts was considered insufficient for the reform of Russian books. Moreover, it was known in Russia that after the fall of Constantinople, Greek books were printed in Catholic countries, and consequently were imbued with the same Latin heresy as the Greek religion. In the prevailing national opinion the arguments in favor of correcting the books in accordance with the Greek texts lacked force, because they revealed that the reformers had strayed from the true faith. From the point of view of the nationalists, antiquity appertained to the Russian texts.

The party of "Zealots of Faith" was sufficiently strong to vanquish the first two men—Dionysius and Arsenius—who corrected the books by means of Greek manuscripts. But others, far more enlightened, appeared in the footsteps of the defeated specialists and, notwithstanding many obstacles, the Kievan and the Greek influences penetrated all walks of life. Kievans were in the printing house, and adapted for the Russian readers the products of Kievan theological literature which, in opposition to the national theory, demonstrated

that Greeks were not heretics, and that the Russian Patriarch should be in close communion with the four Eastern Patriarchs. Nikon's personal example proved that the systematic propaganda of these views served its purpose.

In the early days Nikon had belonged to the circle of the Zealots of Faith assembled around Tsar Alexis (1645-76), and numbering among its members many gifted and energetic workers. One of them, Stephen Vonifatiev, was the Tsar's confessor. Another, Ivan Neronov, a friend of Vonifatiev from Nizhny Novgorod, preached at the Kazan Cathedral with such success that the edifice could not accommodate the crowd, and people stood on the porch and climbed to window sills. The congregation frequently wept, and the preacher himself was scarcely able to speak for sobbing. Shortly after Neronov's arrival in Moscow several of his countrymen also came there from Nizhny Novgorod. With the intention of raising the dignity of the church, reforming the church service from a tedious, incomprehensible ritual into one appealing to the mind and heart of the people, and establishing a union between the parishioners and the priests through the spoken word, the circle soon appointed them as preachers to various towns. Avvakum was sent to Iuriev, Longinus to Murom, Daniel to Kostroma, and Lazarus to Romanov. The aspirations of the circle, though moderate, were nevertheless an innovation, and the activities of the preachers caused great irritation among the rank and file of the Moscow clergy. Accustomed to the mechanical administration of pastoral duties, on meeting their adversaries these clerics would complain. "Bigots that you are, you are introducing a new heresy. You chant in unison, and you teach the people in church, while we never did that but taught them in private. The devil possesses all of you, hypocrites."

Nikon, before he became Patriarch, shared the ambitions of the circle, but having accepted the office he suddenly changed his attitude towards it, which was never forgiven by his friends. Neronov and Avvakum complained bitterly that Nikon previously "held counsel with Archpriest Stephen (Vonifatiev), often came to him to discuss various matters in a friendly manner," but that now "he even refused his friend admittance to the Patriarchal Palace."

"Hitherto thou wast to us a friend, but now thou risest in revolt against us," said Neronov.

The circle of Zealots of Faith became divided for no apparent personal reason, but on more important ideological grounds. Nikon had forsaken the theory of national piety, and with all the ardor of his temperament had succumbed to the influence of new ideas. "Thou praisest the laws of the foreigners and approvest their customs," complained Ivan Neronov to Nikon, "yet heretofore we heard thee say that the Greeks and Little Russians had lost the steadfastness of their faith and their uprightness. But now they are to thee saints and teachers of religion."

The reason for Nikon's sudden change of attitude was the correction of the books. Shortly after his nomination to the Patriarchal See, he decided to form his own opinion on the state of the matter and went to the Patriarchal Library, compared the books printed in Moscow with those of Greece, became convinced that differences existed, and gave his support to the Greek authorities. "Deciding to alter the Russian church books according to those of the Greeks," writes N. F. Kapterev, "deciding to bring the Russian rites and ceremonies into perfect conformity with those of the contemporary Greeks, Nikon does not stop there, but goes even further. He brings us the Greek ambos, the Greek bishop's crosier, Greek cowls, mantles, and the Greek chant. He employs Greek painters and silversmiths, surrounds himself with Greeks, lends them his ear, follows their advice, and in every way advances the Greek authority to the first place, giving it a marked preference over Russian antiquity and the Russian authorities hitherto generally recognized." At the Council of 1656 Nikon forcefully declared. "Although I am a Russian, and the son of a Russian, my faith and convictions are Greek."

With his natural ardor and candor Nikon did not limit himself to the essentials, but went to extremes. Instead of correcting the old texts, he often made an entirely new translation from the Greek. In comparing this translation with the old one, the Russian zealots of antiquity were perplexed to find that Nikon had "printed it in the same language while using different expressions: 'church' for 'temple,' and 'temple' for 'church,' 'infants' for 'children,' and 'chil-

dren' for 'infants'; instead of 'cross,' 'tree'; instead of 'chanters,' 'psalmists.' Is this an improvement?" asked the zealots of antiquity. "Where is the heresy in the old books, and what is in contradiction to the Holy Scriptures?" From their point of view, they saw in these corrections only a blind hatred of everything old. They parodied Nikon's principles as follows: "Arsenius, print the books in any way so long it is not the old way." To complete their resentment, the Schismatics knew, what only in the course of time became known to historical science, that the fundamental principles of book revision had not been complied with, that the books were not compared with the ancient Greek originals. According to the calculation of a modern scholar, out of five hundred manuscripts brought over from the East, only seven were of use in correcting the service books, and the original by which the Russian missal had been corrected, was a Greek prayer book printed in Venice in 1602.

Rightly or wrongly, the work had been done. The time for academic debates had passed; they had to proceed from words to deeds. Those who were indifferent could, for a time, remain neutral towards the belligerent parties, but those who were interested in the argument, materially or spiritually, were forced to make a definite choice. On the one side stood Nikon, armed with the authority of the Eastern Patriarchs and the "rope," strongly reminding one of the famous "cudgel" of Peter the Great, which he confessed to using, at times, in church to "humble gently" his subordinates. On the other side stood the great mass of zealots of Russian piety taught by the authority of the Church to believe in the infallibility of their faith and in Russia's universal mission to hold that faith intact until the second advent of Christ. All they could do was to apply to the Russian official church the same theory which it had applied to the churches of Rome, Greece, and Little Russia. In the famous *Book of Faith*, published in 1648, this was already foreseen in the following paragraph. "The Roman church had renounced the true faith in 1000 and the Little Russian in 1595, the turn of the Great Russian church is to come in 1666." It was in the year 1666 that the Council condemned the opponents of Nikon, and in the following year the decree was confirmed by an anathema pronounced on the Schismatics by the Eastern Patriarchs. Thus the prophecy of the *Book of Faith* was realized. Nikon "abolished the ancient faith of the



fathers and established the impious heterodoxy of Rome," and the Tsar supported the Patriarch in his apostasy of Orthodox faith. Until the Council of 1667, when the anathema was pronounced, the supporters of the national religion still hoped that their opinion would prevail. This hope was also sustained by Nikon's disagreement with the Tsar and the eight years of the Interpatriarchate. But with every succeeding year it became more apparent that it was impossible to convert the Tsar to the reestablishment of the old faith, and in the meantime the mood of the Zealots of Faith also changed. All those who had been moderate and wavering, seeing the absolute hopelessness of the situation, disappeared from the ranks, some openly surrendering themselves, others becoming silent. The principal share in the struggle fell to men such as the Iuriev Archpriest Avvakum. But even Avvakum was reluctant to abandon hope for a peaceful solution. He wrote to the Tsar in one of his optimistic moments:

Take heart as of old, as in the days of Stephen [Vonifatiev], and speak in the Russian tongue, saying Jesus Christ have mercy on us! Forget the "Kyrle eleison" of the Hellenes—and defy them! Thou art the son of Michael, a Russian, and not a Greek Speak thy native tongue; do not debase it either in church, at home, or in speech . . . The Lord has the same love for us, as He has for the Greeks, He gave us, through Cyril and Methodius, the reading and writing in our tongue What could we have better than this, unless it be the tongue of the Angels? But that we shall not have until the general resurrection.

In his bitter moments, when held as a close prisoner in the Pustozersk dungeon, Avvakum wrote quite differently to the Tsar.

This is the last sorrowful entreaty I send thee from the dungeon, as from the grave. . . Take mercy on thine own soul, and make the first step towards piety. . . . Here on earth thou hast not given us a just trial against dissenters, therefore on the Day of Judgment thou shalt answer to us all . . . Thou shalt feel qualms, but too late. . . . We grieve for thy soul, Tsar, but can give thee no help. Thou dost not seek thy salvation . . . By thy decree we are not to be buried next the church, and in our lives thou hast deprived us of the Holy Communion; thou hast devised all this well with thine advisers . . . The holy martyrs, as thou hearest daily in church, were denied a burial on

the sacred ground . . . then why should we be given it? The more thou dost humble and torment us, and dost make us pine, the more we love thee, Tsar, and pray to the Lord for thee, even unto thine end. God keep ye all and convert ye to the truth! But should ye not be converted, then ye will go not to temporal, but to eternal perdition. . . . Nay, Tsar, enough tears have been shed for thee; there is no health in thee! By God's mercy forgive me and farewell until we meet in the beyond. Thou didst send this message to me "Archpriest, the righteous Judge Jesus Christ will pass judgment upon thee and me" May it be as thou wilt, Tsar, thy will is my will. Thou shalt rule for many more years, and I for many years have suffered tortures; thus, when God wills, we shall both go to our eternal home. Dost thou not see, Tsar, living at liberty thou rulest only over the Russian land, while in my imprisonment the Son of God hath subjected heaven and earth to me. Thou upon leaving thy Tsardom for the heavenly home shalt have only the coffin and the shroud. I, by thy decree, am not thought worthy of a shroud and coffin; my bare bones shall be torn asunder and dragged upon the ground by dogs and the birds of the air. But it will be good and pleasant to lie on the ground clothed in light and covered by the sky. . . . Even though, Tsar, thou didst order me thrown to the dogs, with my last benediction I bless thee once again.

This final reckoning with the Tsar was permeated with gloomy pathos and with a hidden intention of affecting his meek spirit, but the last bequest of the famous leader of the dissenters to his followers was of a very different character. It was a courageous, inspiring call to an unceasing struggle for the righteous cause.

Come, Orthodox people, call upon the name of Christ, stand in the midst of Moscow, make the sign of the cross of Christ our Saviour holding two fingers as we learned it from our Holy Fathers. The Kingdom of God is born in this land. God bless ye. Suffer tortures for the two-finger sign of the cross. Do not falter. I, together with ye, am ready to die for Christ. Although I have not much understanding—I am not a learned man—yet I know that the church, which we have received from our Holy Fathers, is pure and sacred. As it came to me so shall I uphold my faith until the end. It was established long before our time, and thus may it remain for evermore.

So, with an open heart, and ready to avow its creed in the midst of Moscow, the piety of the Russian people separated itself from that of the mother church. The breach between the intellectuals

and the masses, for which the Slavophiles have blamed Peter the Great, actually occurred half a century before his time. By joining forces with the political and social protests, the religious protest was increasing its strength tenfold, but this did not in any way alter the fact that the principal cause of the breach was that of conscience. In the middle of the seventeenth century the Russians were made to revile that which for ages they had been taught to hold sacred. But to the newly awakened conscience this change was too abrupt. Therefore the masses refused to follow their leaders, and left to themselves they began to struggle in the dark.

## IV

# DISSENT AMONG THE SCHISMATICS AND THE HISTORY OF THE PRIESTISTS

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**I**N 1645 Tsar Alexis, through Patriarch Nikon, addressed a series of questions to Paisius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, concerning the dissension over the missals and rituals in the Russian church. Paisius, speaking for himself and the council of the Greek clergy, answered as follows.

Your Holiness complains vehemently of the differences in some rituals noticeable in some churches and believes that they are corrupting our faith. The idea is praiseworthy, since one who dreads small errors protects himself against greater ones, but the intent should be corrected, since the heretics whom the Apostle by first and second precept commands us to renounce are one thing, and the schismatics quite another. It was not at the inception that the church acquired the present ritual but gradually and in every church at a different period. Prior to St. Damascenus and Cosmus, we did not have *troparia*, nor hymns to glorify our Saviour, the Virgin Mary, and the Saints, nor did we have church canons. However, so long as the same religion was immutably observed none of this aroused dissension in the churches, and there were neither heretics nor schismatics. Nothing has changed since those days and one must not think the Orthodox faith corrupted because some observe differently the unessential rites, i. e., those unrelated to the articles and dogmas of faith.

This view of the Greek Patriarch, expressed on the eve of the Schism, subsequently was not supported either by him personally or by any other authoritative member of the Eastern church. Speaking through the two Patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria,

the church at the decisive moment of the Schism pronounced upon the Schismatics the anathema of 1667, and thus the local Russian opinion on the domestic conflict remained triumphant. In the heat of the controversy neither side was able to maintain a tolerant point of view towards the ritual as suggested to Nikon and Tsar Alexis by Patriarch Paisius. To both sides it appeared that the ritual was indissolubly connected with the dogma. The adherents of "national antiquity" regarded the peculiarities in the Greek church as heresy and dogmatic errors, while the followers of the Greek authority held the same view towards the practices of the ancient Russian church. Almost two centuries were needed to dispel this mutual misunderstanding, and to recognize that any deviation in the rituals did not alter the dogma. When it became evident that the substance of the Sacrament remained intact, the change in the sign of the cross ceased to be of importance or the subject of strict judgment to the representatives of the official church. On its part the majority of Old Ritualists acknowledged in the "circular message" of 1862 that

the established Russian church as well as the Greek church believes not in God, but in the same God as we do; therefore though we pronounce and write the name of the Saviour "Esus," we dare not find fault when it is written and pronounced "Jesus" . . . Likewise with the four-pointed cross: its form from Apostolic days to the present time has been the same, and was accepted by the Orthodox Greek-Catholic church, therefore we shall neither dishonor nor condemn this cross.

In the middle of the seventeenth century the leaders of the two conflicting parties were far from such a conciliatory point of view, and the question became extremely acute at the Councils of 1666-67. In the anathema of these councils the Old Ritualists did not hear the voice of the church, but that of their temporarily triumphant and victorious enemies. True, the Councils' verdict was ratified by the Patriarchs, but in the opinion of the Old Ritualists they had served, in this case, as unconscious tools of the Nikonians. The Old Ritualists regarded the Greek monk Dionysius as the leader of the Nikonians. Dionysius "ten years previous to the arrival of the Patriarchs had come to Moscow from Mt Athos, and been taught the Russian language and customs. . . . The

Patriarchs having arrived but recently knew only what he told them, which they believed." It was he who "corrupted the spirit of the Patriarchs by saying to them: Holy Fathers, you are foreigners here; if you express your own opinions neither the Tsar nor the authorities will bestow any great honor upon you; instead, like Maximus of the Holy Mount, you will be banished to a monastery, and should you oppose them they will prevent your returning home. . . . Let them do as they please. The Patriarchs followed his advice and obeyed they never questioned anything, and always appeared to agree." A report written by Dionysius containing information on the Schism, a subject entirely unknown to the Patriarchs, was recently discovered and published. It is interesting to notice that its contents was actually embodied in the decree of the Council of 1667.

Finding that the pillars of the Eastern church were guided at the Council by the opinion of Russian hierarchs, who then were in power, the Zealots of Faith refused to accept the decree of the Council as a decision of the whole church. To them the part played there by the Patriarchs appeared only as another proof of the old Russian opinion on the corruptness of the Eastern church. The Russian people were accustomed to consider the preservation of piety in its pure, original state as the special mission of the Russian church. It was not they who separated themselves from the church, but the church that separated itself from them, thereby ceasing to be the true church, which they had vowed to safeguard until the end of the world.

Should the end of the world actually come, the true faith on earth would cease completely, and the loss of ancient Orthodoxy would not be accidental, but fatal and predestined. This was another side of the schismatic dilemma which, even more clearly than the idea of their protracted mission, presented itself to the imagination of the Old Ritualists at the time they broke with the established church. The solution of the dilemma—whether to live or prepare for the Last Judgment—depended on the course of events, and in the current events the zealots of ancient faith sought with apprehension for signs of the approaching end of the world.

The prophecy of the *Book of Faith*, threatening great peril in 1666 to the Russian church, had already been compared, intention-

ally, with the apocalyptic prophecies on the advent of Antichrist. According to the Apocalypse the power of Antichrist was to continue on earth for two and a half years, i. e., from 1666 to 1669, when the end of the world would begin: the sun would be eclipsed, the stars fall from the sky, the earth be burned up, and on the Day of Judgment the last trumpet blown by the Archangel would summon together the righteous and the unrighteous. In anticipation of these calamities there appeared many phenomena, of which we have only the information concerning the region of Nizhny Novgorod. In the autumn of 1668 the fields were neglected, no one ploughed or sowed, and at the beginning of the fateful year 1669 the huts too were abandoned. Assembling in crowds people prayed, fasted, confessed their sins to each other, partook of the Holy Sacrament, and being prepared awaited with awe the Archangel's trumpet call. According to an ancient superstition the end of the world was to come at midnight; and so at nightfall the zealots of ancient piety, arraying themselves in white shirts and shrouds, lay down in coffins hollowed from the trunks of trees, and awaited the trumpet call.

However, night after night went by and a long, terrible year elapsed with its horrors and fears proving vain, for the world remained unchanged and Nikonianism was forever triumphant.

As the last moment approached the rumors among the Old Ritualists about Antichrist became increasingly more varied and stirring. Some advanced the idea that having already come "spiritually" a "sensuous" Antichrist was not to be expected, but Deacon Fedor, Schism's most learned leader, had no difficulty in proving that the Scriptures spoke exactly of a "sensuous" Antichrist. While these debates were in progress, the year 1669 came to an end. Among the optimists the recently banished Avvakum felt renewed hope in the victory for the righteous cause, the reestablishment of true faith in the true church, while the pessimists, like Brother Abraham, again revised the books and prophecies and discovered a mistake in the old chronology. Abraham pointed out that the *Book of Faith* counted the years from the nativity of Jesus Christ, but that Satan was enchained for a thousand years on the day of Christ's resurrection, and from this moment and not that of the Saviour's birth should the day of the world's end be calculated. Accordingly the

coming of Antichrist was not to take place in 1666, as stated in the *Book of Faith*, but in 1699.<sup>1</sup> "Do not be lured by the end of the world and the advent of Antichrist," wrote Avvakum, "the last devil has not yet appeared. Like demons his close friends, the Boiars of the Palace, rest not paving the way for him and banishing the name of Christ. When all is purged, then will come Elijah and Enoch, and later Antichrist, in his time." Temporarily the tense awaiting of the Archangel's trumpet subsided, and while some expected Elijah and Enoch, others with redoubled ardor threw themselves into the struggle for the reestablishment of the rule of ancient piety in Russia.

There was no lack of Elijahs and Enochs, and numerous were the open conflicts between the Schism and the established church, but all attempts at an active struggle ended in defeat. Tsarevna<sup>2</sup> Sophia's government instituted a formal persecution of the Old Ritualists, therefore these defenders of the old faith, who in the days of Tsar Alexis had escaped from Moscow into far-away borderlands, now continued their way across the frontier of the state and into the southern steppes. The Schismatics became disheartened, and with the approach of 1699 they once more devoted themselves to awaiting the end of the world.

This time the expectations were not in vain, for on August 25, 1698, 1. e., five days before the dreaded New Year,<sup>3</sup> during which Antichrist was to manifest himself, Peter returned from abroad. The Streltsy<sup>4</sup> had planned to bar his entrance into Moscow, and to destroy him and all the foreigners who accompanied him, but the plot failed and Peter came to the capital. To everyone's amazement, according to a foreign observer, Peter did not stop at the

<sup>1</sup> In the Old Ritualist chronology the year 1666 (7166 since the creation) expired eight years earlier, 1. e., in 1658, and 1699 (7199) corresponded to 1691 in modern chronology. By the end of the century the Old Ritualist chronology and Abraham's calculations became more popular. In 1691, as will be seen, there was a terrific paroxysm of anticipation of the end of the world. After a repeated failure, the Old Ritualist Council of Novgorod in 1694 decided to consider the advent of Antichrist as having taken place, but only "spiritually." But the anxiety of the masses continued until the appearance of Antichrist—Peter.

<sup>2</sup> The title "tsarevna" was used for the unmarried daughters of a Tsar. "Tsarina" means the Tsar's wife.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> The New Year before Peter's time began in September.

<sup>4</sup> Soldiers of the infantry regiments of the Moscow Garrison, among whom there were many Old Ritualists.—Ed.



Kremlin to worship the Iversky Virgin and the holy relics, but went directly to the German suburb to see Anna Mons. He then spent part of the night feasting with Lefort, and what remained he passed not in his royal palace, but in the barracks of the Guards at Preobrazhenskoe. The following morning amazement changed into terror when, receiving the greetings of welcome, the Tsar with his own hands cut off the beards of several boiars. Only a short time before this Patriarch Adrian had again strongly condemned and anathematized the shaving of the beard as a mortal sin leading to excommunication and the denial of the privilege to partake of the Holy Sacrament and of the right to a Christian burial. "Where will the beardless stand at the Day of Judgment—with the righteous adorned with beards, or with the heretics who shaved their beards—think for yourselves"—thus did the Patriarch end his message. A graphic answer to this question was to be found in the Old Ritualist engravings of the Day of Judgment.

The New Year came five days later, but the Tsar, instead of following the ancient custom and appearing in the Kremlin to receive at a solemn ceremony the Patriarch's benediction and the greetings of the people, spent the whole day in feasting with Shein. To the great joy of the assemblage and amidst uproars of laughter, his court jesters cut off every beard, while the victims of these jokes felt sick at heart. After that rough justice was dispensed to the Streltsy, in which the Tsar took part. Executions alternated with feasts.

All this was sufficient to sustain the belief that the Tsar was Antichrist, and made it clear that he intentionally did everything to prevent his being recognized. Peter did not go to the sanctuaries in Moscow because he knew that the power of the Almighty would prevent him, the ungodly, from approaching the holy places. He had no wish to bow before the ashes of his ancestors, and avoided seeing his relatives because they were strangers to him and might expose his identity. For the same reason he failed to appear before the people on New Year's Day, and because the time of his coming had been predicted he changed the chronology, ordering the year to be counted not from the Creation, but from the birth of Jesus Christ. Moreover, he "stole from the Lord" an entire eight years, reckoning the time from the creation to the nativity of Christ as

5508 years instead of 5500 years, as the Old Ritualists had done. Thus the year 7208 became in transposition 1700, while it should have been 1708, and to complicate the calculation even further, the Tsar decreed the New Year to be in January instead of September. He quite forgot that the world could not have been created in January, when apples had not ripened, for the serpent would have nothing with which to tempt Eve! Finally he had used cunning even in assuming the sign of Antichrist, for he gave himself the title of Emperor, thus concealing his identity under the letter M. If one omits this M and makes the remaining letters correspond in Slavonic figures with numerals the total would equal 666—the number of the apocalyptic beast.

Undoubtedly this time it was the Antichrist. He appeared in accordance with the prophecy in 1699, consequently the end of the world was to be expected in 1702, and so the scenes of 1669 were repeated. The "Liers in Coffins" once more spent their nights in hollowed tree trunks, singing mournful hymns.

But the years followed each other, the sun still shone, the stars remained in the sky, and there were no signs of the end of the world. Not only that, but the religious persecutions, particularly vigorous under Tsarevna Sophia, diminished during the reign of Peter. The government, which was sorely in need of funds, saw in the Schism a source of revenue and for the first time granted to it the legal right of existence.

The zealots of antiquity were greatly disconcerted by the course of events, since none of their conjectures had materialized. Because of their conception of the world the Old Ritualists were able to envisage but two possibilities: either Orthodoxy was still preserved amongst them and must finally triumph, or it was totally lost and Antichrist was ruling the world, whose end was imminent. In both instances the situation was but a temporary one, and in anticipation of a prompt solution it was necessary either to strive for the complete victory of faith, or to prepare for the Day of Judgment. Up to that time all the thoughts of the Old Ritualists were concentrated on these issues, but now the situation quite unexpectedly became more complicated. The end of the world did not come, and with every year there was less hope of a victory over the Nikonians. Finally even the most tenacious had to acknowledge that their

thoughts should dwell not on the life beyond the grave, but on the continuation of an earthly existence—not as a victorious and ruling church, but as a separate religious community requiring careful organization. As long as the problem of the zealots of antiquity was confined to the negative side—the struggle against the Nikonians—the Schism, notwithstanding that from the very beginning there existed two contrary opinions on the outcome of this struggle, remained in complete solidarity. But when none of the opinions was justified, and there arose the question of further existence and of inner organization of the Old Ritualist community, the discord became paramount. In accordance with the outcome desired by each party the organization and even the tenets of the community had to be reconstructed in a different manner. If, notwithstanding the fact that the end of the world had not taken place, Antichrist ruled on earth and Orthodoxy was definitely lost, then there could no longer be any true church or sacraments, and the only means of communion between the people and the Lord were prayer and such religious practices as were accessible to all believers without the mediation of the church. This course was followed by those among the Schismatics, who were named the “Priestless,” but to the pusillanimous masses it seemed too extreme and awe-inspiring. People who were prepared to die for the sake of “a single letter” were reluctant to endure the rest of their lives without confession and the sacraments of the Eucharist, marriage, etc. Naturally the majority preferred to disregard the idea of Antichrist and to think that the true church was still alive, the more so as according to the Holy Scripture the church could never entirely cease to exist. “Have no fear, ye people; even under Antichrist it will not be destroyed. If the devil is not able to abolish the divine Sacraments, how could Antichrist and his children do it?” Thus did Avvakum formulate the canonical tenets of the church. In the beginning the church required no proof of its uninterrupted existence, since the Old Ritualists had accepted themselves as the true church, but soon a serious complication developed, for confident of the imminent victory of the ancient faith they failed, in the heat of the struggle, to prepare themselves for the life of a separate religious community. In order that the continuation of church tradition should be preserved, it was necessary to have three ranks of

church hierarchy: bishopric, priesthood, and deaconry. Only then could the Old Ritualist church depend upon the continuation of the Apostolic succession, for this secured the regular ordination of priests, and thereby the celebration of all sacraments could be observed. But at the most critical moment several bishops who had been in sympathy with the Old Ritualism at its inception recanted to Nikonianism, while others, like Paul Kolomensky, died before the Schism had time to become a separate body. With the disappearance of bishops hostile to Nikonianism the bonds of Orthodox prelacy were forever torn asunder, though the grave significance of this fact was not realized at once by the zealots of the old faith. In the early days, when they hoped for the victory of ancient Orthodoxy, the absence of bishops in the Schism did not excite any special apprehension, because there still were many priests who had been ordained prior to the time of Nikon, and it was easy to comply with the demands of strict Old Ritualist canonists, like Deacon Theodore, that priests ordained according to the new books should not be accepted. Avvakum held a more moderate view on theological details, and even at that time preached that priests of the "new order," if sincere in their convictions and ready to suffer for their faith, could be admitted to the celebration of the sacraments. "How can the world exist without priests?" he asked. "Anything may happen through necessity . . . these are unruly times" As the priests ordained before Nikon's time grew old and died and it became more difficult for the laity to partake of the sacraments, this point of view assumed a great importance. The Solovetsk Monastery supplied the Old Ritualists with a reserve of the Holy Eucharist until the death of Tsar Alexis, but under Theodore the monks deserted the monastery and going to out-of-the-way places began to celebrate the Mass, attracting there many "zealots of ancient faith from distant lands." Finally, during the persecutions in the reign of Tsarevna Sophia, the priests of the pre-Nikonian order acquired especial importance, and wherever they went the hierarchical center of the Schism was transferred. Avvakum's concession was put into practice, and a priest baptized before Nikon's time, notwithstanding his ordination by the Nikonians, was admitted into the "old faith." By this expedient the formidable problem was successfully postponed for several decades. But when the genera-

tion baptized before Nikon's time died the situation became ominous. If the true priesthood no longer existed and was replaced by a "self-appointed assemblage," there could be no true church. Thus the last gleam of light from the apostolic succession went out with the death of the priests born before the Moscow anathemas of 1667.

This thought was too alarming to the pious flock. No, the true church of ancient piety did exist. It must exist, for the chain of apostolic succession could not be broken until the end of the world. "Sooner shall the sun stand still than the church of Our Lord should remain without priests," decided the more moderate adherents of the Schism, and they began a search for "Old Orthodox bishops" who had not adopted the "Nikonian practice." Though the Old Ritualists had no idea where to find these bishops, their imagination, supported by ancient folklore, became active. The true church was somewhere in the East, in Japan, in the "Oponian realm" situated on the seven islands of the ocean-sea. Marco, the monk from the Topozersk Monastery, had been there and found one hundred seventy-nine churches of the "Assyrian tongue" and forty Russian churches built by the fugitive monks from the Solovetsk Monastery. Here the Schism established its religious utopia. But this was not sufficient, something more real was necessary, and in spite of the distrust of the Greeks, there was formed the idea that in more accessible Antioch ancient Orthodoxy remained intact. From Antioch, notwithstanding the well-known view of the Old Ritualists on the subject, the base of Orthodoxy was transferred to Constantinople. In the first years of the eighteenth century an envoy from the Old Ritualist body went to the Greeks to learn what actually was their creed, but the result proved unsatisfactory.

It was obviously impossible to adhere strictly to the principle. Concessions were unavoidable, and Avvakum's maxim that "in need even the law can be changed" had to be adopted. Therefore, if it was impossible to find priests outside the established church, it remained only to apply for them to the Nikonians.

Actually this had already been done. While time was being spent in the futile quest of Old Orthodox bishops, the schismatic community could not remain without clergy, so the sacraments were administered by the priests baptized according to the new

form and ordained by Nikonian bishops. To justify this act it was recalled that the rule of the Holy Fathers authorized the acceptance of priests from some of the heretic churches, without divesting them of their rank.

A large majority of the Priestists realized that the question of hierarchy was the weakest point in the Schism, and approached its solution by a different way. In the thirties of the eighteenth century they concentrated on finding their own bishops, yet they did not seek them in the established church. In spite of many disappointing failures, the Old Ritualists would never have diminished their ardor or tightened their purses in order to achieve success, had not the situation changed radically with the accession to the throne of Empress Catherine II (1762). This reign inaugurated for the Schismatics a period of tolerance, which continued under the Emperors Paul and Alexander I. The Priestists, who had gone abroad to escape persecution, could once again establish their center within the boundaries of Russia. In the second year of her reign, Empress Catherine II officially invited them to return to the motherland, and allocated to them grounds in the Saratov district of Transvolga. Through the government's leniency, the Schismatics had by this time many fugitive priests, but they selected only those whose lives had been blameless. The right to choose and train priests for the Old Ritualist divine service was formally conferred by the Priestists upon Irgiz (the Schismatic center in the province of Saratov), and the Schismatic Council of 1783 decreed to accept no others. In order to make the Schismatics absolutely dependent upon the Irgiz Monasteries for their priests and canonists no chrism or reserve Eucharist were distributed into private hands, but only to the priests who had been "corrected," i. e., reanointed in Irgiz. But these priests had a plentiful supply of both and were always at the service of their flock. Thus the fugitive priests became the most profitable source of revenue to the Irgiz Monasteries, that served as a foundation for their prosperity, and at the same time the need for priests in the community was satisfied through the medium of a regular organization. Often the Schismatics were even better supplied than the neighboring Orthodox parishes, and the quest for bishops ceased for half a century, the period of Irgiz activity.

The situation underwent another radical change with the accession to the throne of Emperor Nicholas I (1825), when it was thought that the reluctance of the Old Ritualists to return to the bosom of the Orthodox church was due to the lenient treatment of the fugitive priests and the tolerant attitude towards the observance of old rites. Accordingly their independent religious existence was limited, the privileges extended by Catherine II and Alexander I were gradually abolished, and a strict surveillance was instituted over the fugitive priests, while the Irgiz Monasteries were prohibited from accepting new priests or assigning old ones to any place in Russia. "By means of bribery," says a modern student of Irgiz, Prince Golitsyn annexed the Lower Monastery in 1829; in 1837, Stepanov "by military force" withdrew the central monasteries from the Schism; in 1841 Fadeiev in a "wolf's night attack upon a sheepfold" seized the upper monasteries. The great "Babylonian captivity" was achieved; on the 28th of May 1841 "the sun of Orthodoxy set in Irgiz."

But dark days did not come alone to Irgiz, for in the Rogozhsky Churchyard, the preeminent center of the Priestists in Moscow, there remained in the course of time only two priests. They were forced to marry half a score of couples at a time and receive the confession of hundreds read aloud by one of the church staff from a list of sins, while the funeral service for thousands and tens of thousands had to be performed six months or a year after the burial. Though the influx of fugitive priests was completely exhausted and the Schismatic priesthood everywhere extremely impoverished, yet the reckoning which prompted the government to adopt compulsory measures proved mistaken. "Under unbearable pressure from the police," says the same writer, "at the expense of terrible moral oppression and torture of tens of thousands of people Orthodoxy added to its fold only a pitiable two per cent from the suffering people in the province of Saratov." Some went over to the Priestless, but the majority endured these conditions, considering them to be only temporary. They concentrated on obtaining a bishop of their own and on establishing a complete hierarchy. In the last of the Irgiz Monasteries to be abolished the ancient illusion of the Priestists was revived. But this time the illusion became a fact, for in less than five years after the closure

of the Upper Monastery the unremitting quest of the Schismatics, brought to the point of despair, was crowned with success. "The sun of Orthodoxy," eclipsed in Irgiz, rose with new luster across the Austrian border.

At the Rogozhsky Council of 1832 the majority of the Priestists accepted the idea of procuring a bishop. There was no dearth either of benefactors, such as the outstanding Old Ritualists S. Gromov and F. Rakhmanov, or of enthusiasts, like Paul Velikodvorsky, all prepared to sacrifice their fortunes and labor to the cause. It was the ideal of the Priestists to find a true Old Orthodox bishop, who kept the ancient faith sacred and intact; yet had they been practical, they would have understood the hopelessness of such a quest. To appease their consciences the leader of this movement, Paul Velikodvorsky, went to the Orthodox East, but before he ended his travels he realized that the neighboring Turkish and Austrian provinces would be far more suitable places for action and search than Persia, Egypt, Palestine, and Syria. Just across the Austrian frontier, in Bukowina, he found several small Schismatic settlements that had obtained from the Austrian Emperor in 1783 (the time of their emigration) the right of full religious freedom. Upon this "patent" of Joseph II, Paul Velikodvorsky based his plan to apply for an official permit which would allow the inhabitants of Bela Krynitsa, one of these settlements, to have their own bishop. Notwithstanding the innumerable difficulties presented by the local authorities and population, Paul finally attained his end in submitting the problem to the highest authorities and to the Emperor. Having been granted permission to establish a bishopric in Bela Krynitsa, he sought someone willing to become founder of the Schismatic hierarchy. But, while he was wandering through Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, the emigrants in Constantinople were considering several possible candidates among the bishops who had no bishoprics. One of them, Ambrose, who at the request of the Turkish government had been excluded by the Patriarch from his diocese in Bosnia for supporting a popular movement against the local pasha, accepted the Schismatics' offer. In 1846 he was established in Bela Krynitsa, and in accordance with the previously concluded agreement ordained his successor from the ranks of the local Schismatics. This was timely, for in less than a year, upon



the demand of the Russian government, Ambrose was sent into exile. His place was filled by Cyril, his candidate for holy orders, a man totally unprepared for the important, very difficult, and responsible part that fell to his lot

For the first time since its inception the Schism had now a complete and regular hierarchy, and this momentous fact thoroughly aroused the Schismatic minds

The Old Ritualists became so accustomed to the abnormal state which had existed for centuries that the appearance of a Schismatic bishop in their midst was regarded by many as an unjustifiable innovation and a digression from the traditions of the fathers. For this reason some members of the Priestists did not accept the Austrian hierarchy entirely, but preferred to retain the fugitive priests. Even to those who had regarded the office of the primate as an indispensable sign of the true church and had with joy accepted the Metropolitan of Bela Krynitsa, the change in the organization of the church suggested new ideas and doubts. Three subjects preeminently excited the Schismatic world. First, there was the attitude of laymen towards the new administration of the church; second, the relation of the Russian bishops to the foreign Metropolitan, and third, the position of the newly organized church of the Priestists towards the Orthodox church. Over each one of these questions there arose divergent opinions and conflicting interests because, with the advent of a supreme church power, the influential lay Schismatics were made to renounce the management of church affairs. Of course, to forswear their customary power was not so pleasant for them, but the majority of Schismatics were willing and ready to submit to the highest authority of the church. The upper and lower strata of the Schismatic community differed in opinion both on the new hierarchy and on the power of the foreign Metropolitan over the national church. The greater number of Russian Schismatic bishops strove to be independent of the foreign Metropolitan, and in this respect the eminent Moscow Schismatics were ready to help them. An "ecclesiastical council" of bishops, similar to a synod, representing the highest power of the Schismatic church, was formed in Moscow, and through its medium the Schismatic "aristocracy" eliminated the authority of the Bela Krynitsa Metropolitan and pre-

served to itself the influence in church affairs. The interests of the rank and file of Schismatics, in this case, did not agree with those of the influential minority, as the masses wanted the Metropolitan alone to have the supreme voice in religious matters. In acquiring bishops the Schismatic church was involuntarily brought closer to the Orthodox church. With many people this approach provoked strong reaction, while others attempted to find for it a theoretical justification. The extremist party found support from the masses and with noteworthy persistence revived the popular doctrine that nowhere is there nor could there ever be a true church, since the Antichrist ruled the world. The intellectual minority, on the contrary, was inclined to introduce a new spirit of tolerance into the Schism and, in refuting the teachings of the Priestless on Antichrist, pointed out the fact that the acceptance of fugitive priests from the Nikonians and of bishops from the Greeks included the assumption that, aside from the Old Ritualist, there existed remnants of the true church in the world.

Hilarion Egorov-Ksenov, a layman, interpreted this mood in his famous "Circular Message" where he particularly emphasized the proximity of the Priestists to the established church. The intellectual Schismatics and, consequently, the "Ecclesiastical Council" in Moscow openly subscribed to the "Circular Message," thus flinging out a challenge to the Schismatic masses. This epistle was like a spark igniting the combustibles of the Priestists gathered since the days of the establishment of the Bela Krynitza Metropolitan See. The duty of the Metropolitan was clear. In order to counteract the autonomous tendencies of the Moscow "Council" he had to repudiate the "Circular Message" which had been adopted by it, and to appeal directly to the masses with a protest against the conciliatory tendencies of the leading Schismatics. But Cyril was too weak and ignorant to act, and during the stress of the struggle he became, in turn, a tool in the hands of one or the other party and came to various conclusions in the short period between 1863 and 1870. He first condemned the "Circular Message" and all the activities of the "Council," then he either approved them unconditionally or resorted to compromises so that finally he became useless and innocuous to both parties. The pitiable part played by

Cyril contributed to a prompt and decisive victory for the Schismatic minority with its conciliatory and autonomous tendencies. After Cyril's death in 1873, his successor was forced to recognize officially the independence of the Russian Schismatic church, among whose triumphant adherents there developed the moderate opinion of the "Circularists." Of the nineteen pre-revolutionary Schismatic bishoprics existing in Russia, thirteen were controlled by the "Circularists," while only three belonged to their opponents, the "Dissenters."

The brief history of the Priestists shows that this religious trend shared the fate of all moderate courses of action. It could have developed only along the lines of one of the extremes which it tried to reconcile. Being a compromise between Orthodoxy and the Priestless, the Priestists could draw closer either to the established church, or the more consistent party within the Schism. The agreement with the established church was impeded, however, by the attitude of the ecclesiastic and secular powers towards the Schism. Because a reconciliation under existing circumstances could not take place on terms satisfactory to both sides, it could not be sincere, and, in the unanimous opinion of both parties, any such serious attempt would prove a complete failure. An accord with the Priestless was acceptable only to the most daring. Thus, vacillating between two extremes and fearing to make a decision, the Priestists were doomed to move in the vicious circle of old ideas. No inner development could produce any significant change, because the results of this development directly overstepped the boundaries of the intermediate position. Therefore, to trace the tendency, by which the advanced religious evolution of the Russian masses was accomplished, it is necessary to study the history of other trends, both more radical and consistent.

## V

# THE HISTORY OF THE PRIESTLESS AND THE DISCORD IN THEIR RANKS

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FOR the moment we must revert to that initial period in the history of the Schism when events raised, but could not yet solve the problem whether the true faith would ultimately triumph or the end of the world ensue. Even in those days there was a definite tendency towards one or the other solution among the supporters of the old faith and there were signs of a division into two hostile camps. The majority, alarmed at the possibility of being deprived of the church and sacraments, were averse to any radical decision. The moderates endeavored to preserve a connection with church life and a part of the belief in the continued existence of the true church by an increasing number of concessions and by artful interpretations. A break in this endless chain, which linked the church with the apostolic days, was too awful for those accustomed to believe implicitly in that which was "established before our time." To live by their own intellect and convictions, beginning their religious life anew, and creating new forms of faith, portended a revolution compared to which all Nikon's reforms would pale into insignificance. In those days not even the adherents to radical principles considered creating any new religious forms, and they renounced the old ones only because of a steadfast belief in the imminent end of the world. "Now is not the time to purify the faith," the monk Abraham said, in view of the inevitable advent of Antichrist. Under the influence of this idea, the people did not stop to reason how they could live without the church, but how they could die with dignity. In exultant natures the fervent

anticipation of the second advent produced an epidemic of religious ecstasy, when the most zealous, not content with passively awaiting the Archangel's trumpet call, lost patience and strove to expedite the end. As the Kingdom of God was not coming to them they would hasten to meet it, and having settled all accounts with the world they decided to be free of it through suicide, should they not succeed in attaining the same end by martyrdom. "To die an unnatural death for the true creed is all one can desire," Avvakum stated. "What could there be nobler? To be with the martyrs, in the ranks of Apostles, with the saints, and as for the fire on earth the suffering is short. . . . Art thou afraid of the furnace? Be bold, defy it, have no fear! While confronting the furnace there is terror, but when thou interest all is forgotten." Avvakum's advice found proselytes who, not satisfied with their own salvation, propagated the salvation of the entire world. "I wish," said one of these maximalists of the seventeenth century, "that all Romanov [his native town], every man, wife, and child, would come to the banks of the Volga, throw themselves into the waters, and sink to the bottom so that the temptations of the world should not attract them. And what is even better: that I might set fire to and burn down the entire city; what joy if it were to burn from end to end destroying all the aged and infants, so that none could receive the stamp of Antichrist." Romanov and Belev would be followed by "all Russia"; and, perhaps, after Russia the "entire world" would be destroyed by fire. Full of these hopes, the propagandists of self-immolation journeyed into the world and spared no words in convincing the simple-minded listeners:

O brothers and sisters, cease your wanderings and the paying of tributes to priests. As ye are righteous, ye must long for salvation and with your wives and children seek the Kingdom of God. Be zealous and do not weaken, the great martyr Avvakum blesses ye and chants the "eternal memory." Flow, flow, like a stream into the fire. Draw nearer, old man, with thy white locks; stoop down, O maiden, in thy virginal beauty. Look into this sacred book; are we disquieting or deceiving ye? Note the style of the words and remember the handwriting. The great Avvakum, the glorious martyr, in every respect like the Apostle Paul, has written these lines. I reverence these words, for a holy hand has traced them.

"And seeing it the aged shed tears, the maiden is crushed; the advocate of self-immolation gradually becomes excited and does not spare his words," writes an antagonist of self-immolation, who has recorded these scenes. In their arguments the rustic propagandists assigned first place to the end of the world, which was to come soon, very soon.

There is no need to wait for Elijah and Enoch; the end of the world <sup>1</sup> will take place in 1689, because "Titin" is already ruling in Moscow. To await this end in worldly surroundings is impossible, for these are evil days: if not burned alive, how could one be rescued from the "dragon"; how observe the rules of food and drink when living among Nikonians? But when reduced to ashes—that is the end of everything. Otherwise one must undergo a penance for ten years at least; fasting, genuflecting, and praying. In the fire you will find the direct way to paradise, for fire purges all sins. And there is no chance of escaping it, for with the end of the world a river of flames will flow engulfing everything. Even the Apostles must pass through that ordeal; but those burning themselves alive will be spared a second ordeal.

Examples of saints who had committed suicide were cited, and many were the visions seen. A peasant from the White Sea littoral, while delirious, saw those burned alive in a radiant place, their heads surrounded with haloes, and in another place "those weak in spirit who served Antichrist" were being tortured on the rack. A drop fell from the rack upon the lip of the peasant, who regained his senses, but his lip was putrified.

There were sufficient persuasions and evidences to inspire frightened listeners and to convince the more zealous amongst them. Around the "teacher" there assembled a group of people willing to die by "fire or water," and even the children said: "Let us go into the flames, for in the other world our shirts will be of gold, our boots of red leather, and there will be plenty of honey, nuts, and apples. It is better to burn alive than serve Antichrist." But the first ardent impulse was not equal to the act of self-immolation. The preacher, who risked being burned with his followers, tried to assemble as great a number of them as possible, hoping that in the meantime their zeal might cool down. As the moment of decision

<sup>1</sup> This was said in 1687. Others expected Antichrist as predicted by Abraham, in 1691.

drew nearer the apprehension arose, and again and again the venture was postponed and sometimes definitely abandoned. "Broken down with grief," the people dispersed or went home, but their consciences having once been awakened they could not rest in peace, and "having rested from grief" the adherents of self-immolation "began to blame themselves for their mode of life, the food they ate, and what they drank." Therefore, after two or three unsuccessful attempts their purpose was at last fulfilled, but largely under pressure of persecution by the government. By defying the "oppressors" even the faltering ones felt confident of obtaining a martyr's crown. In fact, after Tsarevna Sophia's decree in 1684 had threatened every impenitent follower of the old faith with the stake, there remained no choice. Persecutions proved the words of rustic propagandists that there existed no way of escaping Antichrist but by fire and water, and so the chief problem of the teachers and their followers was to incite persecutions. "Thou teachest us," said the people, "that it is good for us to be burned alive; what shall we do, for thou knowest that there are no persecutions?" "Ye children, I shall arrange the persecution," answered the teacher, and taught the people to commit a sacrilege. "Then local authorities will write about us to the capital, whence an agent will be sent for our persecution. But we shall immolate ourselves in the fire, and shall thus escape him." The program was strictly carried out, and when a military detachment arrived the people shut themselves in a house or stronghold, and seeing that they could not "outstay" the soldiers, set fire to the place, taking every precaution against anyone's escaping, while the rest of the community believed that "all these martyrs died joyfully in the flames, having entered them as though attending a feast."

Under the double stress of governmental persecutions and the expected end of the world, self-immolation assumed huge proportions. It supported the hope of the propagandists to "burn down" the whole of Russia by an all-Russian conflagration, and thus solve the religious problem. A modern student figures that from the beginning of the Schism up to the nineties of the seventeenth century no less than twenty thousand people had committed suicide.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Of this number only 3,800 cases had been accounted for prior to the Tsarevna Sophia's decree of 1684

This acute paroxysm of self-immolation having started in the second part of the sixteen eighties could not continue for long, and it began to abate in the first part of the nineties when the persecutions, provoked by Sophia's decree, ceased under the young sovereign, who occupied himself with very different affairs. The dread of both executions and the second advent were succeeded by a sharp reversal in the temper of the Schismatics. The solitary voices of the moderates became audible, and their protest against the horrors of self-immolation attracted to their side many followers from every part of Russia. In the general opinion of some two hundred monks from the Don, Kama, Volga, and the White Sea littoral, as well as many "lay brothers from elsewhere"—voluntary death by suicide, unprovoked by tyranny, was condemned as contrary to the teachings of Christ, the Apostles, and the Holy Fathers. To refute the arguments of the propagandists of self-immolation the Elder Euphrosynus in 1691 composed a vigorous "Epistle of Repudiation." The most radical opponents of Nikonianism ceased now to believe that for them no other issue existed but "fire and water." The faction of the Schism called the Priestless definitely accepted the basic principle that nowhere in the world did there exist any church or sacraments except those accessible to the entire laity.<sup>3</sup> However, this did not imply that physical existence on earth was of necessity to be terminated. It was essential to shun the world and follow the advice of our Saviour: "But when they persecute you in this city flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come." The important principle in the life of the Priestless was as follows. "For the persecuted, to flee; for the captured, to endure; not to invite martyrdom, yet never evade it if fate should deliver you into the hands of the oppressors." With this guiding principle, those who denied the church and sacraments proceeded on their historical way.

There existed in Russia a vast region which seemed especially well adapted for the realization of this régime. There it was easy

<sup>3</sup> As such the Priestless considered baptism (which they repeated for those who joined them) and penance "as connecting man with God even without ordained priests," to use the expression of the more modern Shore-Dweller teacher, Skachkov (1818).



to live hidden from the authorities, and it was customary there to dispense with church and sacraments. A break with the world and the church appeared less fearful and more natural there than in other parts of Russia. The region was that of the North Russian woodlands, the vast territories of ancient Novgorod, the White Sea littoral, and the whole of Siberia, where the relation of the population to the church had always been the same as that in which the zealots of ancient faith found themselves after refusing to believe in the church's further existence. While the Old Ritualists now had no priests and were forced to dispense with the sacraments, the dwellers of Northern Russia never had enjoyed regular administration to their religious needs. In these uninhabited regions, where villages often stood many miles apart, where roads ran through dense forests and muddy swamps, and rivers were the only practical means of communication, the people for many years had had to forego any help from the priest. Frequently half a score or even a score of villages had but one church, therefore its parish covered hundreds of square miles, while it also happened that for a long time the church "stood without chant." Even when a priest was present the local population often hesitated to approach him because his services were too costly. So the northern villagers undertook to depend upon themselves for their spiritual needs, and the church was replaced by numerous chapels where, instead of the mass, the population heard only vespers, matins, and the breviary, chanted by literate members of the community.

Naturally it was easier here than elsewhere to become reconciled to the necessity of doing without priests, and so the doctrine of the Priestless spread to an extraordinary degree, while the followers of the Priestists went into the southwestern borderlands of Russia. The people in the north became quite accustomed to confess their sins to each other and laymen officiated at baptisms, but they could not bear to be deprived forever of the Holy Sacrament. Consequently every charlatan who assured them that he possessed the reserve Eucharist consecrated before Nikon's time, could gain the confidence of the masses and profit thereby. When no Eucharist was to be had the Priestless resorted to a symbolic rite, the partaking of the Holy Communion in the form of raisins. The villagers did not object to omitting the sacrament of marriage because civil

marriage had frequently taken place before this, but the laity was embarrassed when sometimes the strict Old Ritualist monks repudiated both the sacrament of marriage and family life. "The married to be separated, the unmarried not to marry," was their command, but the requirements of life powerfully opposed such theoretical exactions.

As soon as "Nikonian innovations" were put into practice the zealots of ancient piety made their appearance in the northern woods, and simultaneously there was born the propagation of the Schism. A rupture with the world could not be considered the only means of salvation as long as there was hope of overpowering the Nikonians and reestablishing the old faith. But with the vigorous decree of 1684 and the failure of the Streltsy revolt the situation changed, and to true Schismatics there remained only the choice of an open struggle or flight. Self-immolation was another way of evading tortures. "Infirm and feeble are we, therefore we dread to face the tortures; accept, O Lord, this sacrifice by fire as a martyrdom, in atonement for our infirmities." These reflections and prayers are ascribed to the self-immolators by Ivan Filippov, a historian of the Priestless. Although both the tendency to suicide and the ardent impulse of religious fervor soon subsided, there remained another more powerful way—the break with the world. "Among the adherents of the old faith those who could not endure the tortures and would not submit to death by fire fled to the impassable wastelands," says the same historian. In the nineties of the seventeenth century, when the sentiment against self-immolation increased, the escapes became more frequent.

The northern wastelands were soon populated. The first pioneers of the solitary life were the Solovetsk monks who, not having the courage to resist the siege of their monastery by governmental forces, left the island before it began and wandered along the sea coast, bringing with them the hatred of "Nikonian innovations" and the devotion to ancient Orthodoxy. They chose the most remote corners in which to hide from the authorities, and on the shore of a lake in a dense forest cut off from the rest of the world by impassable swamps, with only a wood fire as protection from the northern winters, a hermit would commence his "cruel existence." Gradually he would grow accustomed to his new abode, build him-

self a cell, and clear the ground with a mattock. "Because of the necessities of life" or "for preaching and the teaching of piety" he would sometimes leave the woods for the neighboring villages. "Skis were his coursers and sleighs served as a cart." Soon the hermit's fame spread and he acquired patrons from the parishes and villages—"those loving Christ"—who were ready to hide him from the authorities if necessary. Also there were followers eager to emulate him, and a community gradually formed around the solitary cell. In a common effort the settlers burned entire sections of the forest, tilled the soil and reaped good harvest from the "ashes." The "cruel" and "needy" life of seclusion became "decorous and plentiful," but even so there was no security in such a settlement, for a harvest destroyed by frost or poor crops could scatter the brethren, while the strict hermit who regretted the lost silence would penetrate still further into the dense woods and face new privations. Finally, news about the established community, the peasants who had gone there, and the deliberate preaching by the Elders who had not renounced the world, against attending church and partaking of the "new Holy Sacrament," would reach the authorities, and detachments from the local center would be sent to the hermitage for a thorough investigation. Usually the settlers fled, abandoning and sacrificing both their homes and their supplies to the enemy, for otherwise they would have to burn themselves alive. They were afraid to surrender, thinking that by means of tortures they could be forced to renounce the old faith.

The change in the situation during the last decade of the seventeenth century bore an immediate influence on the life of the "Shore-Dwellers"<sup>4</sup> hermitages. One of the hermit settlements, which up to that time had been constantly moving, so grew in strength and members that it became the center of the Russian Priestless and thanks to its convenient location on the river Vyg was able to survive the "evil times." The legal existence of the Schism was made possible by the attitude towards it of Peter's government, while the personal virtues of the founders secured for this community an outstanding position among the Priestless. In the persons of Daniel Vikulin and Andrew Denisov there were combined the moral authority of an ascetic and strict hermit with

<sup>4</sup> People from the White Sea littoral

that of an enthusiastic youth gifted with worldly shrewdness and a talent for organization. From the beginning Andrew Denisov's talent manifested itself in his wise regulation of the brethren's life within the hermitage, and in the methodical administration of their domestic economy. He also proved his sagacity by forming business connections with the Schismatics in other parts of the country, thus establishing the first example of a wide commercial and industrial association based on absolute mutual confidence and common ethical discipline—an example successfully followed by the Schismatics at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. But this did not end the services rendered by Andrew Denisov to the Vygovsk community. Not only the "leveled mountains," the "cleared forests," the numerous buildings of the monastery, the "decorous life" of the brethren, the influential connections which extended from court to remote towns of Russia bore evidence of his labors, but also the intellectual horizon of the monks which he extended. Prior to his time, literacy was so rare among them that the historian of the Vygovsk Hermitage constantly pointed it out as the special achievement of a monk. Being a brilliant dialectician and an expert in old Russian literature, Denisov realized fully that it was insufficient to be an ordinary "bookman" and that it was indispensable even for an Old Ritualist to acquire a systematic schooling. So, having put his monastery in order, he went to Kiev in the guise of a trader, and for a year devoted himself to the study of theology, rhetoric, logic, and homiletics at the Kiev Academy, probably under the guidance of Theophanes Prokopovich. This step taken by the author of the *Shore-Dwellers' Replies* shows how much broader were his views than those of the majority of his adherents. In the thick of the struggle to go over to the enemy's camp and the very core of heresy, even as preparatory to future conflict with the enemy, was out of the question for a Schismatic of the old school.

That which was a manifestation of Denisov's unusual mind, in later days became a matter of practical necessity to his community. It was due to Andrew's efforts that the Vygovsk brethren had forgotten the time when they communicated with the outside world by skis and pack-sleigh, and when the rumor about the building of a temporary road, fifty miles distant from their monastery, for Peter

to travel by, made the hermits think of flight or self-immolation. Instead of this two roads now passed in front of the monastery, and a "guest house" was an important station for travelers. On the neighboring shore of Lake Onega there was a wharf, which belonged to the monastery, and boats for transporting its own and foreign goods, while in the adjoining Kargopol'sk district vast expanses of arable land were bought or taken on lease, and both on the sea and lakes the brethren had extensive fisheries. The fishermen and hunters went as far as Nova Zembla and Spitzbergen from the monastery, while the "Elders" traded in grain with Southern Russia on a large scale. When the monastery was rebuilt, a remarkable library and a number of schools were founded for scribes, chanters, icon painters, and workers in the various handicrafts. Around the monastery there appeared many settlements forming a connecting link between the monks and the outside world, but as the Vygovsk hermits could not easily supervise the affairs of the settlers, the settlements were governed by their own elected authorities. All this fundamentally changed the views of the monks. While wandering through the woods alone it was easy to preach hatred towards the outside world, but for such an extensive and wealthy community as the Vygovsk Hermitage it was necessary to establish with it definite and friendly relations. The financial power and sympathy of the surrounding population towards the Schism were of great help, although it was not possible to dispense entirely with compromise. The Vygovsk Monastery put into practice the moderate views which in 1691 were preached by Euphrosynus quoting the Apostle Paul "Bidden by infidels to partake of viands, to the glory of God, go and partake of everything offered to you; likewise buy anything that is sold at the mart, without scruples." On the Vyg the relations with the heretic Nikonians had full scope, all the victuals bought in the market were considered pure, and the followers of Denisov ceased to regard the partaking of food and drink out of vessels already touched by the Nikonians as desecration, while communication between the brethren and the authorities led to still further corruption. The certainty that Antichrist ruled the world did not prevent the "Elders" from making such concessions to the authorities as would guarantee them the free practice of their faith. At first these concessions were limited to gifts and donations,

then they consented to the payment of a double poll tax, but this did not suffice. In 1739, nine years after the death of Denisov, a committee of investigation headed by Samarín arrived at Vyg to verify on the spot information given by former dwellers of the Hermitage regarding the concealment of fugitives and the omission of the Tsar's name from their prayers by the brethren. After much delay the first problem was solved by the decree of August 31, 1774. Complying with that decree the monks agreed to register the fugitives voluntarily in the next census and to pay their poll tax for them. But the question of praying for the Tsar had to be settled at once, and it was here that the inner discord in the Vygovsk community became obvious. The ignorant workmen and servants in the monastery were stubborn, resolved to resist as they had before and to crown the brilliant history of Vygovsk Hermitage by an act of self-immolation. But the senior brethren headed by Simeon, brother of Andrew Denisov, decided to yield and, arguing that the ancient church had prayed for the pagan kings, wrote the Tsar's name in the missals of the Priestless.

This measure was the natural outcome of the concessions made, prior to the arrival of Samarín's committee, to the community and the authorities by the Vygovsk brotherhood. Nevertheless, to the majority this recognition of "praying" was the last drop that filled the cup to overflowing. Though most of the dwellers in Vygovsk were dissuaded from self-immolation, it could not prevent dissension among the Priestless.

In fact, the dissension had existed in their midst even before the investigation. Independently from the Denisovs, Theodosius, a sexton from a village church, was teaching the Priestless in the southwestern part of the Novgorod region and across the Polish frontier. In interpreting the principal regulations of the Priestless as he understood them, he disagreed with the Denisovs on some points, without knowing it. When he learned of the existence of the Vygovsk Hermitage he went there repeatedly, trying to elucidate these points and to come to a mutual understanding. The discussions centered around the details of the ritual, but the question of the attitude of the Priestless towards the rest of the world was also brought up by Theodosius. Finally the debates resulted in a further estrangement and mutual embitterment.

The resolution adopted by the senior members of the Vygovsk brotherhood to include the Tsar's name in their prayers created a fundamental moral issue and divided the Priestless into two antagonistic sects. The discord was based on a reaction against the policy of conciliation as accepted by the Vygovsk Monastery, but there was yet another problem which prompted some of the Priestless to seek a compromise, and it soon became the subject of heated arguments between the Theodosians and the Shore-Dwellers. While acknowledging the two sacraments, baptism and penance, the Priestless denied the sacrament of marriage, and therefore preached celibacy. Of course even the strictest adherents of piety must have realized the impossibility of abolishing the contact between "hay" and "fire." Not knowing how to solve this dilemma, they formally insisted on the observance of the ascetic exigencies, but actually they were constrained to overlook their constant violation. Theodosius decided to recognize as legal the marriages blessed by the heretical Nikonian church, though by doing so he was thoroughly inconsistent and disregarded his customary attitude of severity towards the Nikonians, whereas Andrew Denisov, contrary to his usual tolerance, was firm on this point and to the end of his days was inexorable in exacting absolute continence. Yet even he could not abolish family life, and had to be content with moving the families outside the monastery walls.

The followers of Theodosius and Andrew Denisov succeeded in bringing their respective attitudes towards marriage into harmony with the general spirit of their trends. The Theodosians began treating family life with intolerance, while the Shore-Dwellers became more tolerant towards it. However, neither approached a solution of the problem, and the moral conflict between the theory, which repudiated even a legal marriage, and life, which made the existence of a family indispensable, remained in full force. It was necessary to consider seriously some means to reconcile theory with practice, and for the first time the Schismatics faced the problem which could not be solved by mere reference to "what their fathers and grandfathers had thought about it," and sought solution through their own original interpretation of theological literature. This task was brilliantly accomplished by a Theodosian, Ivan Alekseev, who disclosed a knowledge, gift, and breadth of mind equal to those of

Denisov. In 1762, thirty-four years after he first discussed the question with Denisov, his voluminous research on the *Sacrament of Marriage* finally appeared. During this time Alekseiiev never ceased collecting the material on which he based the theory he propagated, and he established the fact that the sacrament of marriage was not performed a second time by the ancient Christian church for married people converted from other creeds "Hence the ancient Church did acknowledge as legal marriages blessed by other creeds, and so it should be," stated Alekseiiev, turning from the Scriptures to his own conclusions. As opposed to other sacraments the bestowal of grace in marriage has no particular connection with the ritual. According to the words of the Great Catechism, "marriage is a sacrament by which the bride and bridegroom, from pure love in their hearts, vow to remain true one to the other." The real "celebrant" performing the rite is the Lord Himself, who invested the nature of man with the desire to procreate and multiply. By the will of God this desire, combined with the troth-plight of the couple, comprises the substance of the sacrament; the rest is mere convention. The priest is only the community's witness to the union, and the church ceremony is simply a popular custom lending to marriage a general assent and confirming its validity and civil stability. In order to preserve the stability, marriage should not dispense with the ceremony. Marriage existed in the "natural law" long before the church ceremony, which is only a formality, appeared in the "written law." Therefore the Priestless church had to follow in the footsteps of the ancient Christian church and acknowledge the marriages blessed by the Nikonians. This benediction bore only public witness to the marriage, while the sacrament itself was achieved by the Lord and the mutual understanding of the bride and bridegroom.

This argument was absolutely new to the Schism, and Alekseiiev had to defend his right to formulate new theological theories. To justify himself he pointed out the radical changes in life which surrounded them.

Until the people sensed the lack of marriage it never occurred to them to speak of it; then followed the desire, and a research was instituted. Because the Fathers did not marry is no reason for us to hesitate or shrink from it. One must remember that the Fathers dwelt far from



the world and passed through hermitic and monastic life. They abstained from married life not because they scorned it, but they did not wish to convert the hermitage into a community. Their lives cannot be a precedent to us, for we live in the community and are surrounded by every worldly temptation.

In these words the marriage question is set forth explicitly. The changed conditions in the Schismatic world originally provoked Alekseev's theoretical arguments, which were a new, substantial advance towards the reconciliation of the Priestless doctrines with the requisites of life. Those of the Old Ritualists who did not want a reconciliation had to protest this advance, and so the marriage question became to the Priestless what the problem of accepting fugitive priests was to the Priestists. Around these two questions centered the struggle between the moderate and radical parties of the two trends of Old Ritualism. The difference was that the moderate party of the Priestists involuntarily allied itself with the tenets of the established church, while the Priestless of the moderate trend, denying the very basis of a positive religion, became more estranged from it, and were able to enter upon a free religious life. Consequently the victory of the moderate views on the "reanointment" of fugitive priests only brought the Priestists to a limited recognition of the Nikonian church, and the victory of the moderate Priestless on the marriage question led the Schismatics away from the Orthodox tradition and to the idea of a "natural religious law" as opposed to the "written law" of Christian revelation. In both instances the struggle for the central position was bitter and unyielding. It continued throughout the entire length of their history, bringing no unanimous solution, but instead increasing the discord.

The inner development of the various tendencies among the Priestless subsequently followed a widely separated course. There remained only one alternative for the people interested in the further unfolding of the religious doctrine and the coordination of their lives with the ideal either a complete restoration of the Old Ritualist antiquity or a definite rupture with the church tradition, which would lead to dependence upon individual reasoning. The masses of the Priestless were unable to accept either way, for as ever they were far behind the ardent and intelligent minority. Govern-

mental persecutions and worldly associations alike gradually forced the masses to lean towards the moderate views on marriage. They were not prepared to accept the radical principles of the doctrine, for their mentality remained the same as it was at the beginning of the Schism. Modern writers, who cannot understand how the Schism of the seventeenth century could have originated in a dispute over some trifling points of ritual, should refer to the debates held by the Priestless in the nineteenth century.

In 1817 there arose, in the Saratov community of Theodosians, a question which before long agitated the followers of Theodosius all over Russia. When making the sign of the cross in repeating the prayer "Our Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us," an Old Ritualist brings his hand to the left shoulder at the words "Son of God." Yet it is a known fact that the devil always sits on the left shoulder of man and whispers many temptations into his ear. Therefore, is not the name of God delivered over to the outrages of the evil one? Both in Saratov and at the Churchyard of the Transfiguration of Our Lord in Moscow, they were unable to solve the problem. At last Gnusin, a Theodosian preceptor, decided that at the word "Christ" one should place the hand on the bosom, and only after having repeated the prayer bring the hand to the left shoulder. "And because of the ignorance of the Christians who formerly made the sign of the cross differently," he added, "their sin shall be forgiven and I take upon myself to entreat the Lord's mercy." A similar state of mind existed among the rank and file of the Shore-Dwellers. At the end of the twenties of the nineteenth century two preceptors from the Chapel of the Intercession of the Holy Virgin quarreled because one had introduced the ancient chant of the Shore-Dwellers and the other, to spite him, restored the recitative chant approved by Avvakum. "The faint-hearted Christians have forgotten the rules by which the Angels sing, in adopting the soul-destroying recitative chant," complained the adherents of the Chapel of the Intercession, while their opponents established a special prayer house and successfully enlisted followers from among the provincial Shore-Dwellers.

In the presence of such a mood among the masses of the Priestless, the new religious movements could not gain ground. They had to begin by attracting the more zealous and those best prepared by

life and reasoning power, therefore the results of these movements could find no place within the boundaries of the existing Schismatic communities. New trends of religious thought had to find new forms of expression. But before passing to these we must examine still another form which with all its seeming innovation was a final effort to induce the Priestless to return to the ideal of the late seventeenth century.

The tolerance of Catherine's government had created a most favorable basis for bringing even radical parties of the Schism nearer to the surrounding community. But the easier the reconciliation and the more tempting the compromise, the more dangerous did it appear to the truly radical members of the Priestless. The tolerance of the government towards the Schism was regarded by them as a new temptation, intended to deliver the people into the power of the "son of evil." Were the Schismatics to continue living in the community, they must comply perforce with the conditions of communal life which from the strict point of view appeared to be the handiwork of Antichrist. The inconsistency between word and deed disturbed those possessing a high-strung nature. Their souls demanded atonement for the sin of associating with the world; and they, being tormented by doubts, either sought death by starvation in the dense forests or amazed the community by their vociferous protests aimed at provoking persecutions. Many conscientious men found personal satisfaction in such an outlet until one of them, endowed with a strong mind, will power, and erudition, assembled a small group of people, similarly minded, and formed a religious society where they could find the expression of their individual ideas in a harmonious theoretical system.

This was done by Euphemius, a "tramp" peasant and an army deserter, who from his teens had been absorbed in the Schism, and who later became the founder of the sect of "Wanderers." For a long time he had sought moral comfort in the teachings of the Priestless, when finally he decided to break with them and found his own doctrine. Euphemius went from sect to sect, but nowhere did the theory agree with practice, which convinced him that everywhere a hidden compromise existed. His artless attempts to uncover it only provoked indignant rebuffs, and having found no support, Euphemius lost faith in the leaders of Old Ritualism. He

set forth to wander through the world in search of truth, and when he met at last a zealous "wanderer" like himself his conception of the world became definitely strengthened, and he began an active propaganda.

In a book entitled *The Flower Garden*, Euphemius revealed that he did not credit his doctrine with any new and original ideas. He simply wanted to reproduce what he had heard and read about the lives of the "survivors of ancient faith." These "formerly existing Christians" whom he wanted to imitate were not the early Christians, as some modern scholars have supposed, but the hermits of the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries, who were so vividly described by the historian of the Vygovsk Monastery. The followers of Euphemius were right in testifying at an investigation that the sect of Wanderers originated at the time of the Solovetsk Monastery's destruction, for Euphemius and his disciples had modeled themselves on the hermit life of the "martyrs of faith" of the first Schismatic generation. However, the theories by which they endeavored to prove the necessity of re-establishing such a life possessed more modernism than Euphemius realized. The cardinal point of his reasoning was a protest against reconciliation with the world, so the entire doctrine was resolved into a systematic refutation of the existing order, the origin of which he sought for only in the historical records of the Schism. Everything was well in Russia up to the days of Nikon and Peter. Nikon corrupted the faith, while Peter "separated the people into various classes," introducing private property and social inequality, from which resulted the struggle between the rich and the poor, the pursuit of profit, lawsuits, etc.; it was Peter also who forced the people to enter various forms of state service and who imposed upon them unbearable taxations. The principal cause of all these changes were the poll tax and delimitation of the land, while the census served as a means of calculating the soldiery of Antichrist, and passports made it possible to give all enemies of Christ the stamp of Antichrist. The land was allotted "to some in plenty, to others sparingly, and to many none at all," thus creating a struggle for possession of property. Yet, the word "mine," according to St. John Chrysostom, proceeded from the devil, "for God created equally everything that is essential to all of us," and *my* world, *my*

sun, *my* water, *my* forest, and so forth, cannot be said. Since the time of Peter, the devil rules on the Russian throne and the entire world is infected by his breath; therefore to avoid communion with the evil one, there remains but to reject all public duties and connections, renounce family and personal property, and flee from the political and civil community. The Lord indicated this means when He commanded the Prophets to leave Babel (i. e., the world), for "he who is a friend of the world becomes an enemy to the Lord." The Wanderers quoted from the ancient hermits that St. Cyril of Jerusalem also advised joining the open fight against Satan or else fleeing from him. A compromise was useless, because "it is impossible to look at the sky with one eye and at the ground with the other," or serve two masters at the same time. "Have no city, no village, no home"; this is the only means possible of avoiding the nets of Antichrist and preparing properly for the Day of Judgment. A wanderer's life is the only existence acceptable to a true Christian.

This radical doctrine preached by Euphemius pleased the people of the northeast, where the habits of the nomads still survived, and the social aspect of the teaching justified the masses in protesting against the state and its interference with the life of the people. Sopolky, a large village some fifteen miles away from Iaroslavl, became the center of the "Union of the Wanderers," and in the first quarter of the nineteenth century the preaching of their doctrine spread from there down the entire course of the Volga to Saratov and Astrakhan, and up to the province of Tver. It found its way also to Archangel in the far north and developed on a large scale in the wastelands of Siberia. All the branches recognized the hierarchic authority of Sopolky, where in important cases the representatives of the various centers of the Wanderers assembled to debate controversial questions and pronounce their decisions. By the middle of the nineteenth century the Wanderers already possessed a considerable literature. However, their propagation led to consequences similar to those we have seen among the Shore-Dwellers on the Vyg and the Theodosians at the Churchyard of the Transfiguration. It was becoming increasingly difficult to preserve intact among the Priestless the exalted ideal of 1669 or 1702. Immediately after the death of Euphemius in 1792 his followers modi-

fied his ascetic idea of wandering and agreed to meet the world halfway, for some Wanderers felt the need for places of rest and refuge, while many of the Priestless, though sharing these views, were not staunch enough to put them into practice. Such people remained in the community, occupying themselves with agriculture and trade, and formed among the sectarians a special class called the "Faithful" or "friends of Wanderers." In their houses were built secret passages and subterranean places where the true Wanderers or "Christ's People" could hide from the authorities. All this required changes in the tenets, because the Faithful were allowed association with the world and, except for the last Sacrament, communion with the established church, which was contrary to the theory of the Wanderers. Every Faithful before death had to return to the ranks of true Wanderers, but even this soon became a mere formality. When dying, a Faithful would request that he be taken into a nearby forest, garden, or yard, so as not to die in his own house, thereby fulfilling the order of the sect. Nor did even the true Wanderers follow the rules of Euphemius, for gradually they inclined towards the recognition of private property, giving it at first into the custody of the Faithful and later managing it themselves. Marriage was also recognized, first as merely a conjugal relationship, and then as a union blessed by the sect or the church. These concessions became particularly notable when the strict régime of Nicholas I, during which the Wanderers greatly increased in number, was followed by the days of tolerance under Alexander II. Modern scholars have noted that some adherents of the sect were quite willing to renounce their teaching on Antichrist and replace it with rationalistic explanations.

The appearance of a new sect, the "Prayerless," in the last part of the nineteenth century proved that the more radical trends among the Priestless were favorable ground for the growth of rationalistic views. The founder of this sect was Gabriel Zimin, a Don Cossack, who in his childhood had been a member of the Priestists, later joined the Priestless, and finally, with the help of books, had developed his own doctrine. The cardinal point of this teaching was that at the end of the "seventh millennium" A. D., i. e., after 1666, began the reign of the "Spirit," and from that time on everything had to be taken "spiritually." As a matter of principle the doctrine

did not imply any denial of the cult. On the contrary, it recognized that up to 1666 the cult and religion in their entirety were correct and legitimate, but from that time "truth was extinct" and at present the Holy Scriptures, as well as the very advent of Christ, had to be interpreted in a spiritual sense. Under the reign of the Holy Ghost all exterior rites lost their power. Therefore the Prayerless, like the Priestless, repudiated the priesthood, the sacraments and divine service, ceased the worshiping of icons, celebrating the order of marriage, the baptism of children, and the burial of the dead according to church rituals. The Day of Judgment had taken place at the end of the seventh millennium, and another advent of Christ was not to be expected. Nothing was known of the future life since all statements in the Holy Scriptures related only to the earthly existence. From this came the deduction that Paradise also would be on earth. War, taxation, and every law and oath were disowned, and the existence of the state and authorities was acknowledged only conditionally and from necessity.

In some respects this approached the Wanderers, with whom the Prayerless were closely connected, while in others it suggested the doctrine of Spiritual Christians,<sup>5</sup> to the confusion of missionaries and authorities.

Thus by the time of the revolution of 1917 the cycle of progress in the doctrines of both the Priestless and the Priestists seemed to have been completed. Their theoretical possibilities were exhausted, while in practice they reached results which denied their fundamental principles. There had been a struggle between two principal trends—the radical and the moderate in the history of the Priestists and the Priestless. In contradiction to the tenor of the Priestists, that of the radical Priestless came nearer the traditional tenets of the church. Their history consisted of a series of efforts made to preserve their doctrine on its original basis. This could not be realized because the more they advanced into the modern period, the more difficult it became to reproduce the historical circumstances and to support the standard of religious conception which had helped to create the doctrine of Antichrist. The moderate trend of the Priestless chose a different path, one that was more appropriate to the general march of historical progress. From the early days,

<sup>5</sup> See below, Chapter VI.—Ed.

being disheartened by the impossibility of compressing life into the confines of a dying theory, it chose to adapt that theory to the exigencies of life and was gradually forced to abandon church tradition and ritualistic formalism. "The church does not exist in its walls, but in its rules; when attending church, do not go to the edifice, but to the light; *the church is not in the walls and roofs, but in the faith and life.*" This quotation from St. John Chrysostom was frequently cited by the Priestless theologians in their religious debates. But before there was time for the moderate members of this sect to draw logical conclusions from their premises, it had already been done by the radical trends, the Wanderers and others, who denied on principle the existing order of church and state. They rejected in the name of the Holy Ghost—whose dominion commenced with the fall of the old religion and the ancient method of salvation, at the beginning of the "eighth millennium" of the Christian chronology—the Nikonian and all other churches, all the sacraments, and all the books. There is but a very small difference between this point of view and that of Spiritual Christianity, so that frequently the local authorities believed the teaching of the Prayerless to be that of the Molokans.<sup>6</sup> However, even for the most radical of zealots of the old faith the transition from an abstract denial to the establishment of new positive doctrines proved to be extremely difficult. The Sarapul Prayerless, disappointed in their negative faith, admitted that "it was not a religion." In fact, all those trends that had developed among the Priestless—the conditional denial of the church only because Nikon and Peter corrupted the faith, the readiness to renounce the cult and be satisfied with silent "spiritual prayer," and the unrealizable decision to reject the existing order—all led to an impasse. The only outcome was in a complete revision of the principles of religion without regard to historical precedents and emancipated from the pedantry of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. It was this new path that was chosen by the Russian Sectarians

<sup>6</sup> See below, Chapter VI—Ed



## VI

# THE DEVELOPMENT OF RUSSIAN SECTARIANISM

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FROM the Schism we must proceed to Sectarianism: from the guardians of the ancient church to the teachers of the new religious views. Students in whose opinion the inclination of ancient Russia towards the ritual was a characteristic and inalienable trait of the national piety, for a long time were puzzled by the ascendancy of these new ideas in Russia. A true Russian, they thought, could never be a Sectarian, therefore Sectarianism must be an extraneous growth of foreign origin, artificially and fortuitously grafted on the national faith. Efforts were made to prove that it came either from the West or the East, to trace it back to the Bogumils or to the heresies of the early Christian era; in a word, its origin was sought for everywhere except in the inner, psychological development of the people. Subsequently a sounder point of view predominated which acknowledged Sectarianism to be an independent and national product like the ritualistic piety which it replaced, and its rise ceased to be regarded as a sudden and exceptional historical phenomenon. The new conception of faith gradually developed from the ancient one, and this evolution proceeded through the same natural succession of religious forms as in the history of Western Christianity.

Everywhere religious thought and feeling progressed in a more or less uniform manner; this uniformity can only be stated empirically, pending the time when psychologists will explain it scientifically. In Orthodoxy, as in Christianity in general and all other monotheistic religions, the process of development con-

sisted in the gradual spiritualization of faith. Depending on the difference in personal or national temperament, this process of spiritualization followed either an emotional or an intellectual trend. In the first case, the heart required a closer, more spontaneous relationship with the Deity than the ritualistic religion would allow. In casting off the bonds of the ritual and the formula of prayer, emotional natures surrendered themselves to ecstasy and hoped through mystical exercises to enter into communion with God. In the second case, reason demanded a more critical attitude towards the traditional religious doctrine and tried to reconcile this doctrine with the laws of the human mind and the achievements of science. These mental requirements brought inquiring natures to rationalism—a critical appraisal of the contents of revealed religion, gradually leading them to a refutation of tradition, and subsequently of the revelation itself. Both trends—the mystical and the rationalistic, either advanced independently, now and then engaging in a mutual struggle, or formed an alliance and sometimes were even merged. Each showed itself a natural enemy of ritualistic piety and strove to eliminate all externals and intermediaries between God and man.

The forms assumed by religious evolution in Germanic Europe were those which bore the closest relation to Russia. It was there that the movement against religious formalism passed through two important stages. During the first of them the church tradition was repudiated, and it was considered possible to base the faith on the direct instructions of its Founder as expressed in the Gospel. This stage of protest corresponded to the Evangelical Christianity of the Germanic world. During the second stage even the Gospel was regarded as a superfluous intermediary between the Lord and His people. It was conceived that direct communion with the Deity could be arranged. worshipping God “in the Spirit” and finding His reflection in one’s own soul. The abode of the Holy Ghost was admitted to be in the heart of every true Christian. At this stage religion had broken all the bonds of tradition and the Holy Scriptures, and had departed from the field of the positive revealed religion, transforming itself into Spiritual Christianity.

The great religious movement of Germanic Europe left its mark even on Russian life. The doctrines of the Evangelical and some of Spiritual Christianity had appeared in very definite form in Russia

at the time of the Reformation. To the masses, recently converted to ritualistic piety from paganism, the new radical doctrines passed quite unnoticed. Only such districts as Novgorod and Pskov, being nearest the western frontiers, have felt their influence, while in other parts of Russia the new ideas found response in but a few sympathetic souls. Thus in Moscow a Calvinist or Lutheran surgeon from Lithuania so confused Matthew Bashkin, a Russian soldier, with his ideas that the latter's "perplexing arguments" bewildered his confessor.

There was neither flesh nor blood in the Eucharist, only plain bread and wine. The church was not an edifice, but a reunion of the faithful. The icons were "damned idols." One did not attain salvation by penitence, but by ceasing to sin. One must worship "one" God—the Father. The traditions of the Holy Fathers were just fables, and the pronouncements of the Ecumenical Councils arbitrary. One should believe only in the Gospel and the Epistles.

Similar ideas acquired from German pastors were brought back from his native Pskov by Arthemius, the Abbot of the Monastery of the Holy Trinity, but after visiting the Transvolga region he was carried away by far more radical theories. In the Belozersk communities of the Transvolga region there were preserved, even in those days, remnants of the rationalistic heresy, which had penetrated through some obscure channels—probably the Balkan Peninsula—to Novgorod, and which later became part of the Orthodox mystical movement, introduced directly from Mt. Athos by Nilus of Sorsk. Repressed by executions, the heretical movement abandoned its radicalism and in a large measure approached the ideas of Evangelical Christianity. The fugitive serf, Theodosius the Squint-eyed, was an earnest promulgator of this trend and the most consistent and radical of the Russian "heretics" of the middle of the sixteenth century.

These people were quite out of place in the Russia of those days. They were condemned to imprisonment by the Councils of 1553-54, and later Arthemius and Theodosius moved to Lithuania, which was nearer the seat of the new doctrines. The effect of this unusual atmosphere of religious freedom produced in them very different results. Arthemius was awed by it, and contrary to the radicalism

of Theodosius the Squint-eyed, his literary opponent, he became a supporter of moderate orthodoxy. Theodosius became intimate with the Lithuanian-Polish Anti-Trinitarians and developed his doctrine into a complete system, with many characteristics, which placed it in close relationship to Spiritual Christianity. He was not satisfied with the usual evangelical criticism, the condemnation of icons and relics, the general protest against the church ritual, but accepted these views only as a starting point and went much further in the direction of Spiritual Christianity. Theodosius openly declared that his followers, having embraced the "spiritual wisdom," were "sons of God" and the only ones to whom "truth was revealed," while all others were "curs and outsiders" who, "although they might lead a virtuous life, could not attain salvation if they do not embrace spiritual wisdom." Yet Theodosius the Squint-eyed found "true children of God" among all creeds. "All people are equal before the Lord, be they Tatars or Germans." The Apostle Peter had said: "In every nation the godly and righteous are agreeable to the Lord. . . . One who possesses wisdom is to us a spiritual brother." No baptism was needed, and the partaking of Holy Communion was unnecessary, for "Christ gave us the Word, and not His flesh and blood." Prayer could be dispensed with, because the Gospel decrees "to bow in spirit and truth, and not fall prostrate on the ground." Desist from falsehood—therein lies the prayer. There shall be no churches, for nothing is written about them either in the Gospel or the Epistles; the Apostles entered a chamber, not a church. According to St. John Chrysostom, "the church is not in the walls, but in the reunion of the faithful." Abstinence from food and matrimony is superfluous, for "everything is pure to the pure." There shall be no preceptors in the community of the faithful, since there is but one preceptor—Jesus Christ. All who have embraced "spiritual wisdom" are equals as "spiritual brothers and children." The parents shall not be honored, for the Holy Scripture says: "Do not choose an earthly father; there is but one Father—the Lord." Property must be bestowed on the community in the manner of the early Christians. There can be no superiors or wars among the true followers of Christ. It is not becoming that they should be in awe of the authorities or pay them tribute.

These ideas, which were part of the Evangelical and Spiritual Christianity, were to be found in Russia long before the sixteenth century, but it is questionable that they could have been preserved until the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries by word of mouth. It is doubtful whether the few Russians who had shared these views during the Reformation period left any successors. At least their doctrines have descended to us only from the polemical writings of their opponents, who tried to disprove them. These polemists involuntarily rendered a great service to the cause of the Reform, as their works continued to be copied and read long after the views they confuted ceased to exist. When in the seventeenth century some similar ideas appeared, it was only necessary to adapt to them the writings of the old polemists, and in that form they were introduced into the new popular collection of polemical works. The polemics of Joseph of Volokolamsk against the Judaizers, and those of Zenobius of Oten against the doctrine of Theodosius the Squint-eyed were applied to a new purpose. Thanks to these alterations and reprintings the reformist views of the "heretics" of the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries survived until the time when they could be understood and when the occasion arose to profit by them.

In the sixteenth century there was only an insignificant group of people able to understand and apply these theories to practice. Even the Church Council that had been analyzing and condemning the views of the "heretics" was not aware either of their origin or of their real meaning. The Evangelical teachings of Bashkin and Arthemius were regarded as "Latin heresy," for officially the Russian church until 1639 made no distinction between Protestant and Catholic churches. The rumors about "Luther's heresy" had reached the "Terrible" Tsar, and it was under this designation that he included all the reformist dogmas. Notwithstanding that there were Lutherans and Calvinists living in Moscow, and that the Tsar held conversations with them regarding their faith, Russian ideas on the Reformation continued to be very confused. This was not because the foreigners were secretive about their faith, but because the Russians did not know how to formulate their questions. They were more interested in the unessential rather than the essential part of foreign creeds, the substance of which they could not grasp. Tsar Ivan the Terrible bade Pastor Martin Nandelstedt of Kukei-

nos write fully as to "how they conducted their divine service, how the priests entered the church to officiate, and how they vested themselves . . . and did they ring the bells every single day or only on holidays?" These questions were asked by the Tsar some years after he had held a solemn theological debate with Brother Ian Rakita of Bohemia, whom Ivan the Terrible believed to be Lutheran, and who therefore was constrained to restrict his arguments to the rudiments of Protestantism. This was a cruel disappointment to Ian Rakita, who came to Russia with the hope of converting its people to the true faith. But Tsar Ivan wanted to annihilate Rakita, and at parting handed him a lengthy list of objections. "It is futile talking to a cur and casting pearls before swine," wrote the Tsar in the introduction. To prove to Rakita that he knew and understood the venom of "Luther's heresy," he verbosely refuted the Bohemian's explanations and even touched upon the question of salvation through faith. However, it is obvious that he remained completely ignorant of the Protestant teachings on the sacraments. All the Tsar and his people knew of the contemporary religious movements in the West was that Luther had forsaken the ancient church, arrogated to himself the rights of a Church Father, and had married a nun. They were not interested in the contents of his teachings and sought no further information.

The situation changed during the seventeenth century when the Moscow government, through the family interests of the Tsar, came to have a better knowledge of Protestantism. Tsar Michael sought the niece of Christian VI of Denmark in marriage, and later proposed marrying his daughter to the King's son. The first plan was immediately dropped when it was learned that the prospective bride would not agree to being rebaptized as decreed by the Russian Church Council of 1620 for all "Latins" wishing to embrace Orthodoxy. The second plan progressed somewhat further, since Prince Woldemar came to Moscow, where the Russian government kept him for two years, hoping to win him over, by means of lengthy religious debates, to being rebaptized. Ivan Nasedka, verger of the Cathedral of the Assumption, who in 1662 had accompanied the Tsar's envoys to Denmark, and thus had had the opportunity of studying the Lutheran church service, led these

debates for Russia. With the help of Simon Budny's Calvinistic catechism, which Nasedka believed to be Lutheran, he studied the theory of Protestantism. Printed in 1562 in Lithuania, "for the plain people of the Russian tongue," this catechism was translated at the beginning of the seventeenth century from Western Russian into the Church Slavonic language and existed in Russia in manuscript form. On his return to Russia, Nasedka compiled the so-called *Exposition of the Lutheran Faith*, a voluminous work the great part of which was taken by him from the South Russian polemical literature. The author's own contribution was characterized by a sharp, chiding tone, indiscriminate citation of "sacred scripts" (including the apocrypha), a clumsy distribution of material, and a purely formal approach to theological questions. Even so the *Exposition of the Lutheran Faith* familiarized the Russians with the Protestant dogma, and they no longer confused it with "Latinism." In 1639 there appeared a new edition of the missal in which a complex ceremony for recanting "Luther's heresy" was introduced and wherein the principal tenets of Protestantism were formulated in thirty-five paragraphs borrowed from the *Exposition of the Lutheran Faith*. Of course these anathemas against Protestant teachers and their doctrines helped considerably in making them better known in Russia. During the forties of the seventeenth century, besides the missal, the printing house in Moscow also published a series of works intended to disprove Lutheranism and Calvinism. The debates and their unsuccessful results attracted the attention of the Muscovites and gave rise to many varied discussions.

In addition to this there was a direct Protestant propaganda which originated on the Southern Finnish coast, annexed by Sweden in 1617, where the new authorities tried to convert the population to Lutheranism. As early as 1614 there was printed in Narva "for the Russian priests, the entire community of Ivangorod, and all the people of the same faith" a "concise statement and explanation of the Christian faith and its worship in Sweden," written by chaplains to the King of Sweden. "Here are briefly disclosed and disproved the most flagrant fallacies existing in the Russian religion," was the sub-title of the book. In 1625 there was established in Stockholm a Slavonic printing house, which in 1628

published a Russian translation of Luther's catechism. Precautions against this propaganda were taken by the Russians, and the governor of Novgorod was forbidden to admit even people of the true faith from across the frontier into the Cathedral of St Sophia, while those who favored or had embraced Lutheranism were prohibited from entering any Orthodox church. However, such measures were powerless in preventing the spread of propaganda. Many Russians shared the views which Olearius discovered in 1634 in a Russian trader, living in Narva, who when showing his guests the Slavonic Bible said: "Here I seek for the will of God and act accordingly"; and speaking of fasts he stated: "What is the benefit of abstaining from meat, if instead I eat good fish and drink wine and mead?" He did not worship the icons but kept them only "in memory of the saints." "I could easily rub off the paint and burn the wooden plank," continued the trader, adding "How could there be salvation in that?"

It was equally difficult to prevent the population of the capital from coming in touch with foreigners. In the sixteenth century such association did not endanger the Russian religion, but the situation changed at the beginning of the seventeenth century when the interest of the masses in Protestantism increased, and the government had to be more cautious. Foreigners were moved to the outskirts of Moscow, their churches were destroyed, their intercourse with the rest of the population was made more and more difficult, and finally they were prohibited from having Orthodox servants. Nevertheless, with the Stockholm translation of Luther's catechism the Evangelist influence penetrated to Moscow. The channels by which the evangelical views reached the capital and the means by which they were spread can be found in the history of a circle formed in Moscow at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries. Thomas Ivanov, a barber, who through his profession had a slight knowledge of foreign medical science, in the year 1693 ceased going to confession or partaking of the Holy Sacrament, declaring that icons were idols and the Eucharist nothing but plain bread and wine. About this time his cousin, Dmitry Tveritinov, became an apprentice in a dispensary of foreign surgeons, and there acquired similar views. Being "naturally clever," Tveritinov not only made his life conform



to his new faith, as his cousin Thomas did, but diligently applied himself to working out a new religious theory, and then to its propagation. Having provided himself with an edition of Luther's and a manuscript copy of Budny's catechism, as well as with the Ostrozhsk and Moscow editions of the Bible, he compiled an extensive extract of biblical quotations, arranging them systematically according to the principal tenets of the Protestant faith. Before long Tveritinov found an extremely helpful ally in Ivan Maksimov, who having learned some of the Protestant arguments from the Swedish pastors in Narva and Moscow, felt qualms and misgivings regarding his former religious faith. He entered the Slavonic-Greco-Latin Academy, recently founded in Moscow, and after six years reached the class in philosophy, yet his doubts did not cease with academic science, but grew more profound under the influence of his Muscovite friends. Maksimov came to know Thomas Ivanov and his cousin Tveritinov, who at once took advantage of this friendship to enlarge his scientific knowledge. Maksimov visited Tveritinov in order to teach him Latin, and "in scholarly fashion" they held debates on the worshipping of icons, the validity of relics, the prayers for the dead, the Sacrament of Transfiguration, etc., in both Latin and Russian, thereby attracting many inquisitive and interested people to Dmitry's home. Some of the listeners became Tveritinov's disciples, and soon a fraternity rallied around him, about which one of his brothers-in-law remarked. "His disciples live in extreme comfort, for they supply each other with everything; were I to join them I too should become prosperous." But outside the circle of his intimate friends also Tveritinov was diligently spreading his propaganda, holding religious discussions either in the homes of the princes and boiars, where he appeared in his capacity of surgeon, or in the barber shop of his cousin Thomas on the All Saints Bridge, and even before the merchants in the city mart. From mouth to mouth the circle was enlarged and its propaganda became bolder and more outspoken. The friends of Tveritinov "raised their heretical voices as daringly as any of the foreigners," while Dmitry openly said: "Thank God, in Moscow of our day everyone is free to chose and profess his creed." Subsequent events have proved the partial justice of his words. Tveritinov had powerful patronage, and it was not until 1714 that with

great effort the ecclesiastical authorities succeeded in having him and his adherents condemned by a church council. Finally most of the followers of the new faith, against their conscience, had to repudiate their views. In the Cathedral of the Assumption Tveritinov solemnly anathematized his doctrine. But Thomas Ivanov proved to be irreconcilable. He revoked his renunciation and on being arrested in the Monastery of the Holy Miracle destroyed the icon of Metropolitan Alexis. For this he was burned at the stake in the Red Square

In what did the teachings of Tveritinov actually consist? He had called himself and his disciples "Evangelists," i. e., "the Followers of the Gospel," and also "non-accepters of man-made traditions," and yet the more learned among his listeners found that at times his preachings "were contrary to the doctrine of the Lutherans," that they were "more iconoclastic than those of the Lutherans and Calvinists, and also showed signs of a new heresy." Had their knowledge been more extensive, they would have recognized the ancient origin of Tveritinov's ideas when he disagreed with Lutheranism and Calvinism. He affirmed that flesh, having turned to ashes after death, could never be resuscitated, and that the saints asleep in their graves could not hear prayers addressed to them. This had been said by the Russian heretics of the sixteenth century. Likewise, the abhorrence of the cross as the means of the Saviour's ignominious crucifixion had been discovered by Arthemius among the Lithuanian heretics of the same period. The teachings were not new, but the enthusiasm that caused their revival was genuine, and in this sense Tveritinov's listeners were correct when they called his doctrine a "new heresy." They justly emphasized the unusual zeal with which he turned from mere denial of the disclaimed dogmas to derision and censure. With the skill of an expert propagandist Tveritinov infuriated his Orthodox audience, leading it from indignation against his artifices to doubts, from doubts to questionings, and from questionings to a firm belief in the new ideas. Not many of his listeners went through all these stages, but the seed of doubt nevertheless fell on soil more fertile than that of a century and a half before. Although Tveritinov became a renegade, the effect of his teaching was not destroyed.

Evangelical Christianity continued to exist in Russia, having assumed the same forms and following the same trends which for the first time were noticed in the sixteenth century. Because of its national modification, the "new heresy" could not be considered strictly "Calvinistic," so that when it became necessary to name its followers, the ecclesiastical authorities generally used the term "Judaizers," borrowing it from the polemical literature of the seventeenth century. In this garb of pseudo-Judaism, Tveritinov's Evangelical teachings were preserved until another outburst of religious propaganda at the end of the eighteenth century gave them a new form.

But before studying the subsequent fate of Evangelical Christianity we must dwell upon the birth of Spiritual Christianity. The first Russian Evangelists leaned towards Spiritual Christianity, but before they had time to develop it from the doctrine that man is a living church, it evolved in Russia quite independently from a purely national source. Even during the time of the Council of a Hundred Chapters, there appeared in Russia pseudo-prophets and prophetesses, who would fall on the ground in convulsions, and then would recount their visions and foretell the future. In early days these prophecies were ascribed to the devil or pagan gods, but at the end of the seventeenth century, under the influence of the religious unrest agitating the masses, the prophets began to be regarded as "inspired by the Holy Ghost." One of them, the peasant Simeon, was described by Euphrosynus at a meeting of self-immolators in the eighties of the seventeenth century thus: "When he feels the call, the Spirit smites him, and lying on the ground in ecstasy he receives a communication and recovering from the affliction says: my Spirit is prophesying . . ." "Brethren, this is a Prophet and the Holy Ghost speaks through him," announced the followers of Simeon. The idea of the Lord dwelling in man's soul was equally familiar to ancient Russian literature. From the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries the belief persisted that if one repeated the "Prayer to Jesus" unceasingly, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost would always dwell in one's heart. For the incarnation of the Son of God in a man, Radaev, a Sektarian of the nineteenth century, advised the same ancient expedient—

the constant repetition of the "Prayer to Jesus." But the belief that God dwelt in man acquired its special sectarian meaning only after Spiritual Christianity had appeared in Russia.

All signs indicate that the unbroken tradition of Spiritual Christianity goes back to the period when Evangelical Christianity began to develop in Russia, i. e., to the end of the seventeenth century. It was believed that the initiative to form this new sect proceeded from a foreigner, Quirinus Kuhlmann, who came to Russia in 1689 to prophesy on his mystical visions. The artless German in his enthusiasm was misled into thinking that with the help of Moscow it would be possible to establish one church on earth in which there should be no authorities and no property. In the German suburb of Moscow he discovered some thirty adherents who like him shared the mystical belief of Jacob Boehme, but within six months Kuhlmann was burned at the stake, and after his execution the Moscow Boehmists again became silent. In fact Russian Spiritual Christianity did not emanate from these foreign sources, for its creation was taking place far from the capital, and its original contents were hardly in accord with the views of those who believed in the "Millennium of the Kingdom of Christ." The imminent end of the world was looked for by both groups, but while Kuhlmann expected the millennium in two and a half centuries, in Russia it was awaited daily.

Spiritual Christianity originated in the same surroundings as those in which the Priestless had their beginning. Even the birthplace of the new sect was not far from the districts of Romanov and Poshekhonie, where the most fervid propaganda of self-immolation was centered. The monk Kapiton, the initiator of the doctrine of self-immolation, already was preaching a mysterious faith. He surrounded himself with "Elders" who did not enter the Lord's church, dug "burrows" in the ground in which to live, and tried to escape governmental persecution by constantly moving from one province to another. The disciples of Kapiton dwelt in the Viaznyky woods until 1691, "evading divine service, the sacraments, and old faith." From the dark corners of the Viaznyky and Kerzhensk woods the Elders now emerged, being roused from their burrows by the general religious exaltation. They adhered to the ideas taught them by Kapiton: the denial of the existence of the grace of

God and the sacraments on earth, and the exaltation of the ascetic "chainbearers." Yet when they had to face the world, to expose their ideas, and to provide an outlet for the feelings of the masses, they immediately disagreed and separated themselves into various sects. Thus simultaneously there appeared the theories of the Priestless and the self-immolators.

From these surroundings there issued also the theory of "Christianism," the first Russian sect of Spiritual Christians or the "Lord's People." In 1691, in characterizing one of the new sects into which the Old Ritualists had split, Euphrosynus made some vague remarks that could have been applied appropriately to the more modern doctrine of the "Khlysty." "The followers of Cosmus Medvedsky," he said, "evade the priests while their men share priesthood with maidens and women." There was in this a germ of a positive cult based on recognizing in the lay members of the community, regardless of sex, that mysterious power essential for officiating at divine service. These ministers of cult were "Prophets" through whom the "Spirit spoke"; the forerunners of the "Prophets," the "Apostles," the "Christs," and the "Mothers of God" of the future Khlysty.

The legend of the Khlysty traces the historical origin of the sect to the propaganda of Kapiton's disciples in the central Transvolga region during the eighties and the nineties of the seventeenth century, but does not present any accurate records of its early days except to tell of the moral state in which the faithful people of Russia found themselves at the time the sect was founded. According to this legend, the Christian religion had disappeared three hundred years before, because Antichrist had been born among the monks and had definitely destroyed faith on earth. The people quarreled over books, as to which could bring them salvation—the "old" or the "new" ones. In the province of Kostroma there lived in those days a holy man called Daniel, who owned a large collection of "old" books, and who put an end to all futile arguments by making the discovery that neither "old" nor "new" books were needed to attain salvation. Only one book was essential, "the golden book, the book of life, the book of the Dove—the Holy Ghost," whereupon he placed all his books in a sack and threw them into the Volga. The Lord's People then assembled and re-

solved that wise ones of their number should be selected and sent to summon the Lord to descend to earth. They went to a holy place and began imploring the Lord with sobs and prayers, which worked a great miracle. In the parish of St. George, on Mt. Gorodina in the district of Starodub, "in a chariot of fire there descended from the clouds the Lord God of Sabaoth and entered the saintly body of Daniel." When Patriarch Nikon, learning of this, imprisoned the "Supreme God" Daniel, a mist covered the entire earth and remained until he had been set free to return home to Kostroma, where he then gave his twelve commandments to the people.

This legend shows how closely interwoven were the Schismatic ideas with those of Spiritual Christianity. Daniel, who had thrown the ancient books into the river and begun preaching on the "living Spirit," was symbolic of the sect which served as a stepping-stone from the Priestless to the purer Spiritual Christianity of later days. Russian Evangelical Christianity came from the people who "in a scholarly fashion" knew how to sustain in Latin the Lutheran and Calvinistic arguments, and therefore the development of its doctrine was systematical from the beginning, while Spiritual Christianity emerged from the masses and in its initial period preserved the characteristics of the popular conception of the world, which had prevailed in the old Schismatic sects. Daniel's twelve commandments resembled principally the doctrines accepted by the Priestless on the river Vyg about the year 1700. Such decrees as "celibates shall not marry, the married shall unmarried; no wine or beer shall be drunk; no stealing or quarreling shall take place"—commandments constantly repeated at the vigils of the Khlysty—had been accepted word for word by the followers of Andrew Denisov. At the same time the Prophets and vigils of the Khlysty, though not directly descended from the magi and festivals of the pagans, recalled the double faith of ancient days. The Prophets and Prophetesses of the Khlysty applied themselves to forecasting the weather, the crops, or the amount of fish to be caught, while their vigils frequently ended in an orgy. All this was familiar to the masses from olden days.

As a result of the popular origin of the Khlysty the ritualistic outer form was the first to be developed, and only in the nineteenth century was the doctrine of Spiritual Christianity unfolded

in detail. The hierarchical differences which existed from the beginning among the Khlysty must be attributed specifically to the incompleteness of their theoretical development.

A peasant, calling himself Christ and allowing the people to worship him, wandered through the villages followed by a "fair maiden whom he called the Mother of God." "This pseudo-Christ also had twelve disciples," wrote Dmitry, the Metropolitan of Rostov, at the beginning of the eighteenth century in his *Inquiry* about the Khlysty. The peasant "Christ" was Ivan Suslov, the adopted son of "God of Sabaoth," Daniel. After Suslov's death the rôle of Christ was assumed by Procopius Lupin, a Strelets, who had been discharged from military service "because of epilepsy." Next after the "Christ" and the "Mother of God" came the "Prophets" and "Prophetesses," titles anyone could assume who had learned to "walk in the circle" during the vigils and had so proved that the Spirit dwelt within him. The rest of the community, awaiting the visitation of the Spirit, submitted unconditionally to all orders given by the Spirit to the "Helmsman" of the Khlysty "Ship." During vigils they formed a chorus which sang the songs of the Khlysty, every vigil was required to begin with a song known as the "Prayer to the Lord," summoning the Spirit to the gathering. Other songs, slow and doleful at the start, gradually growing into a spirited *allegro* and boisterous *presto*, accompanied the rhythmic, whirling movements, which continued until the participants were completely exhausted and were seized with hysterical spasms, the Spirit "rolled on" the entire Ship, and the Prophet began to prophesy, first as to the fate of the Ship and then as to that of every individual member.

The settings of the cult link the Khlysty very closely to their past. The white shirts and burning candles of the vigilants recall the Schismatics' expectation of the end of the world, while the older songs, in their form and contents, approach the folklore and serve as a guide to the popular views on the Day of Judgment, Paradise, etc. The holding of two fingers in making the sign of the cross also reminds one of the Schismatic origin of the sect.

The interest aroused by the cult soon attracted a great following to the Khlysty. During the first thirty years of their existence, under Suslov and Lupin, the Khlysty settled in Moscow and founded

there several Ships. An action was brought against them in 1733 and over fifty adherents of the sect were placed on trial. This was followed by a second suit in 1745-52 at which the accused already numbered 416, and there were in addition to these about 167 Khlysty in hiding from the authorities. Over and above the four, and subsequently eight, Ships in Moscow, there existed a number of communities in the provinces, especially in the Transvolga region where the Khlysty had originated. The persecution dealt the sect a strong blow, but did not altogether put it out of existence. It served as a lesson to the Khlysty, and they profited thereby. The destruction of their Ships they accepted as divine punishment for their having strayed from the narrow path leading to salvation and for dissension among their Prophets. In fact, having first preached abstinence and asceticism, the Sectarrians subsequently followed quite different precepts. The ideas of the Priestless on marriage were combined with those of the Spiritual Christians on free love: matrimony was lust; free love a "love in Christ." In the further development of the doctrine there appeared an antinomian justification for those views. Once the Spirit guided the will, man was no longer responsible for his actions and was free to disobey the external dictates of law and ethics; more than that, to yield to the desires of the flesh was one of the ways, and perhaps the shortest one, towards its mortification.

However, some of the Khlysty in the name of strict asceticism protested against the dissoluteness. Like the ancient Russian scribes, the protesting members decided that any harm or obstacle in the path of the soul's salvation was due to women, for feminine beauty "corroded the world and hindered the progress of the people towards God." By the middle of the eighteenth century Conrad Selivanov, who founded a new sect, the "Skoptsy" (the Castrated), preached that the only way to avoid temptation was to make it impossible for the people to sin. At first he met with opposition from the Khlysty Prophets, but afterwards Anna Romanova, the famous Prophetess of the Ship of Akulina, the Khlysty Mother of God, acknowledged him to be God, and he succeeded in recruiting many followers from among the Khlysty of the provinces of Orel, Kaluga, Tula, and Moscow. When beginning his preaching Selivanov did not intend to sever his relations with the Khlysty, he



only thought to perfect their doctrine with his new baptism, but it happened that first the Skoptsy formed an independent order among the Khlysty, and then separated definitely from them. Being less numerous than the Khlysty, the Skoptsy gathered around their "God" on his return from banishment in Siberia (1775-96), and until his death in 1832 he directed all his Russian adherents. Thus the sect gained strength as an organization, and being more centralized than that of the Khlysty conformed rigidly to its religious dogmas. Selivanov's famous message to the Brethren is based on the idea which had inspired the foundation of the sect, that beauty was a danger. In addition to the name of God he assumed that of Tsar, called himself Peter III, and promised his followers to establish his terrestrial kingdom at St. Petersburg, introducing thereby in his doctrine a new political element, while leaving its spiritual side as undeveloped as at its inception.

The Ships of the Khlysty were better adapted to an inner development of their tenets; each was under the independent guidance of its Helmsman and its pseudo-prophets, while the Helmsmen of the Skoptsy were appointed by Selivanov, or at least had to be confirmed by him. With more freedom the Ships of the Khlysty had a correspondingly greater variety of theories and cults than those of the Skoptsy.

Through the growth of public interest in Spiritual Christianity and the influence from abroad in the early part of the nineteenth century, the development of the doctrines in both sects made further progress. But before this had taken place Spiritual Christianity had time in which to find a new religious expression. Simultaneously with the Skoptsy there appeared another sect—the "Dukhobors" ("Wrestlers by the Spirit")—which represented the dogmas of Spiritual Christianity in a purer form, free of Schismatic traditions, and yet somewhat dependent on the Khlysty.

The origin of the Dukhobors still remains obscure. It is known that in 1740-50 there wandered through the province of Kharkov a Prussian corporal, who exerted a strong influence on the local population while spreading the doctrine which ancient commentators called "Quakerism," and that shortly after this the tenets of the Dukhobors found their way to the south and then to the north of what was believed to be the seat of the Dukhobor propaganda

—the provinces of Ekaterinoslav and Tambov—in each place showing characteristic local peculiarities. In Tambov, a Dukhobor preacher named Hilarion Pobirokhin appeared as the Son of God, surrounded by twelve “Archangels,” come to judge the world. These traits reveal the influence of the Khlysty, and we feel justified in surmising that both Spiritual Christianity in Tambov and the first followers of the Skoptsy emanated from the same source—the Khlysty. In the south, on the contrary, the Ekaterinoslav Dukhobors from the very beginning showed greater spiritual understanding of the new doctrines, and Silvanus Kolesnikov, their Patriarch, was a learned man who probably had some knowledge of the teachings of the Western mystics. It is significant that the ardent and popular preaching of the famous Ukrainian mystic and philosopher, Gregory Skovoroda, dates from that same period (between the sixties and nineties of the eighteenth century) in which the sect of the Dukhobors was founded. Gregory Skovoroda, while not a member of any sect, was a Sectarian in spirit, for except the doctrine on reincarnation, his views were identical with those of the Dukhobors, and he frankly called himself an “Abrahamite”<sup>1</sup> in his letters to friends. “Let everyone else do as he pleases,” he wrote, “I have devoted myself wholly to seeking the divine wisdom. We were born to that end, and I live by it, think of it day and night, and by it I shall die.” In all Skovoroda’s works, so highly prized by Russian Sectarrians, Spiritual Christianity is ardently propagated.

Many are those who seek Christ in the sovereignty of Augustus and Tiberius, or who follow the trail through Jerusalem, Jordan, and Bethlehem; there is Christ, they say to one another. I know, the Angel cries out to them, ye are looking for the crucified Christ. He is not there! So they search for Him in the ranks of the mighty, in magnificent houses, at sumptuous feasts . . . staring at the blue firmament, the sun, the moon they try to find Him among the worlds of Copernicus. . . . No, He is not there! Then where is He? They seek Him through long prayers, in fastings, in the rituals . . . not there! Then where is He? Surely He must be there where they preach so eloquently, and study the secrets of the Prophets . . . No, neither is He there. The ill-fated scribes, reading the Prophets, sought for man but fell on a

<sup>1</sup> A Bohemian sect similar to the Dukhobors.

corpse, and perished with it. . . . No, Christ is not among the dead. If ye have not found Him hitherto within yourselves, it is needless to search elsewhere.

Always "throughout the ages and in all people" His voice resounded ceaselessly from every heart in which the divine spark had not been extinguished by carnal passions. Satan had sown "the seed of evil" in the hearts of man, kindling them with sinful desires. In craving for satisfaction of these desires, we were subordinated to the flesh, and thereby extinguished the divine flame, whereas by mortifying the flesh, "the spirit shall be freed from bodily servitude and shall ascend towards its supreme nature, its eternity." Having purified itself, the soul "is freed of the bodily world and the worldly body" and "from the narrow material confines it soars beyond spiritual freedom." Only the inner spirit really exists. Everything on the surface and subject to emotions is but a passing shadow, an ever changing torrent of water. Our earthly existence is but a pilgrimage, "the Exodus of Israelites to the Promised Land." The "tribe of Israel"—descendants of Abraham, who was the first to see truth through the carnal veil, were those who knew the inner spirit or, in other words, knew themselves. Such people were more difficult to find than a white raven: one had to search for them with the lantern of Diogenes. They were those who had seen truth, regardless of nationality and creed, and Skovoroda was among them. He compared his inner voice to the "genius" of Socrates and submitted willingly to all the "Spirit dictated," and his intimate friends were prepared to accept the dictates of his Spirit as prophecies. Skovoroda possessed that mystic feeling of spiritual fire, familiar to all Spiritual Christians, which supported their belief that the Holy Ghost dwelt within them. Thus, following a trance, he was sustained in the choice of his vocation. His attitude towards the external forms of Christianity was a negative one, but in order to appease the "fainthearted" he decided to comply with the Christian rituals before death. Skovoroda interpreted the Scriptures "spiritually, seeking the essence beyond words." In his opinion, the Bible was composed entirely of "pictures" and "figures," which had to be accepted spiritually and interpreted allegorically.

The official confession, written by the Ekaterinoslav Dukhobors

and presented to the governor during their imprisonment in 1791, bears close similarity to the ideas of Skovoroda, though a direct influence is impossible to prove. The most probable inference is that when the confession was written the same ideas had been more or less adopted by all Ukrainian Spiritual Christians. "We are still unlearned in our tongue, nor have we mastered it on paper," so ends this remarkable document;

scribes are expensive, and being prisoners it is not easy for us to find them, so we beg most humbly that leniency will be shown us, illiterates, for the disorderly presentation of our thoughts, the vagueness and incompleteness of the explanations, the lack of fluency, and the misuse of words. If we in some instances have cloaked the eternal truth coarsely and thereby blemished the face of it, we beg that for this reason truth, which in itself is forever beautiful, should not be scorned.

From this confession, however, it is evident that the writers were possessed of natural eloquence and dexterity of literary expression. In spite of the defects in the exposition, the ideas disclosed make up a harmonious and complete system, possessing a philosophical basis like that of ancient Gnosticism. According to the doctrine of the Dukhobors, before the birth of people, human souls were created after God's image, i. e., the Holy Trinity. The three elements of the soul—Reason, Memory, and Will—are united in one substance, which constitutes the image of God within the soul and makes it a participant of the Holy Trinity. Even before the Creation some of the souls had sinned and forsaken the Lord, and so were cast out upon the material world, "deprived of power to remember their previous existence," and led into temptations of evil. Therefore the body, human flesh, is but a temporary prison, "a Cherubim barring the way to the Tree of Life." The sojourn in this prison must have but one aim—the restoration of God's image in man, thereby breaking the material bonds. The flesh covering the soul is but thin water. Earthly life is the boiling of water in a cauldron, and the aim of life is its "distillation into pure alcohol of eternity." So "every worldly weakness sows evil in the flesh" and sends the soul deeper into the world—the material substance. The first people on earth, notwithstanding their fall, had no need for "any rituals and institutions except the spiritual reason in their

souls." The Holy Ghost enlightened them; they were the true "people of God," the tribe of Abel. Yet from the beginning the "sons of perdition," descendants of Cain, oppressed and betrayed the tribe of Abel, which was "dispersed throughout the world among creeds of various denominations." In a moral sense the struggle between Cain and Abel signified a struggle between matter and the spirit. In the course of time people became "corrupted and loathsome" through the triumph of flesh, and it was then that they began to feel a need for external forms. The craving for the pleasures of life, in place of the former love, produced discord among them. "The wise ones, seeing this and knowing that the members of such a community could never stand by themselves, established powers which restrained their profligacy," but "the laws of the kings could not destroy the sins of the evil ones, they could only prevent the smallest part" of their sins from open expression. With no laws "the people would have fought each other like dogs, and the strongest would have strangled the weak."

The decline in the spiritual life exacted the establishment of a church law parallel with the civil law. What should have been pure spirit and inner belief now materialized into outward formula, the Scriptures and the ritual, and because of this, many divisions took place and various churches were constituted. Finally, spiritual wisdom—love and mercy—which formerly permeated the "nature of the world," was incarnated in the earthly form of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. But Christ "by the tidings of Gabriel enters into every one of God's People" and "is conceived by them spiritually, as He was by the Virgin Mary." The entire life of Jesus on earth was the symbol of a gradual spiritual regeneration taking place within every one of us and tending towards our transformation into the "pure and perfect new Jesus, the Man." For those who attained such regeneration, any observance of the civil or church laws became superfluous. "In the heart, where the sun of eternal truth in its noonday brilliance had risen, the moon and stars would cease to shine, and the children of God verily would have no need for kings, or authorities, or human laws. Jesus Christ had freed them of all laws; for the righteous no law is required." The People of God were above any church forms and denominational differences; they were members of an invisible, universal Church. "Jesus al-

lowed them to enter the temples of the Pope, the Greeks, of Luther, or of Calvin." They were living temples in themselves, according to the words of Apostle Paul. "Each of us," was written in the confession, "can cleanse himself in the abode of his spirit without seeking the far-off font at Jerusalem." The Scriptures and the ritual were only signs and "symbolic images," and to obey them without possessing the inner inspiration, i. e., the love of God and of fellow creatures, meant "hypocrisy," whereas with an inspired, heartfelt love all outward manifestations became superfluous. "Compared to faith the ceremonies are as husk to the grain or compliments to true kindness," thus did Skovoroda explain the idea. It was Kolesnikov who had in his time accustomed the Dukhobors to the allegorical interpretation of the Bible. "Any time that could be spared from work, we love to devote to reading, to listening, and to narrating in picturesque stories, and with God's help, even intelligently, the words of Our Lord," wrote the authors of the confession.

The Dukhobors' views on the world in general and on their own state prior to the acceptance of the sectarian doctrine, in particular, were described as follows:

We were born, over each of us was performed the outward Christian ritual. We grew to maturity and old age. All during our lives we went to church. And then? We must confess that like everyone else we stood there completely bored, unable to understand the pedantic, unintelligible style and the rapid and confused pronunciation. Thus are many million souls led to God. Standing in church did not increase our knowledge of ourselves, the Lord, or His divine will, and so, like other children of this world, we remained blind and unrepentant of our sins. But when we began attending our own meetings, hearing the Word of God explained to us and slowly understanding it, then with inexpressible astonishment we saw the Lord and His divine will, and with full consciousness prayed God to help us forget our sinful desires and follow Him . . . After that, we understood more than we had previously in church, and realized too that the lessons were not boring to those who had been taught to understand them at home. . . . Oh, how much better it would have been if the people had spent a few hundreds on enlightening us about ourselves, the world, and the Lord's Holy Word, instead of wasting thousands on the building of great, magnificently adorned stone temples!

The mystical doctrine of the Ukrainian Dukhobors was decidedly in advance of its time. Spiritual Christianity stated its ideal in the Ekaterinoslav confession, but its realization belonged to the future. The contrast between the ideal and actuality was still so great that it was impossible to preserve the ideal intact, and it had to be brought down to the average level prevailing at that time among the Sectarians. Compared to the high standard of the Ekaterinoslav confession, the compromises that followed were undoubtedly retrogressive, and yet in comparison to the former views of the Sectarians, they still were to be considered a progress.

The first changes were introduced into the doctrine of the Dukhobors when its followers in Tambov acquired traits peculiar to the Khlysty. In 1802, during the examination of two Tambov Dukhobors, Metropolitan Eugene found that they were familiar with the Ekaterinoslav confession. Thus, to his question, "Had distinct authority been entrusted by Christ to anyone in His Church?" they replied, "With us all are equals." In fact, they had a "Christ" of their own—Pobirokhin, and one of his successors, the famous Kapustin, formulated a theory of "Christhood," according to which God dwelt in the hearts of all true Christians, but Christ was incarnate only in the man of His choice. For did He not say, "I shall be with you till the end of the world." In fulfillment of this promise, He is reincarnated in one man from generation to generation. During the first eras of Christianity everyone knew and recognized the one in whom Christ dwelt, acknowledging him as their head and calling him Pope. Soon there appeared pseudo-popes, whom the world continued to worship, while Christ, in compliance with His words, gathered only a few of the faithful around Him "For many are called, but few are chosen." The chosen were the Dukhobors, in one of whom Christ was still incarnate. To this Kapustin added the belief that at his death the Spirit of Christ dwelling within him would transmigrate to his son—the chosen vessel. Thus he established a dynasty of "Christs," which existed until 1886 and proved to be a source of countless misfortunes to the Dukhobors. Kapustin surrounded himself with a council of thirty, which after his death developed into an inquisitorial tribunal, and under his weak grandson, Hilarion Kalmykov, it tyrannized over the entire community of the Dukhobors. Judging by the reports of the local

government officials, the despotism of the council was equaled only by the complete corruption in the life of the community. "In their ways and customs," an observer remarked in 1827, "one can see that their morals are greatly defiled." In 1835-39 these circumstances led to a governmental investigation, which in 1841-45 ended in the banishment of the Dukhobors to the Caucasus from Molochnyia Vody, where they had been living since the time of Alexander I.

Parallel with the decline in the inner life of the Dukhobor community the doctrine also degenerated. In 1827, when comparing their past with the present, the same observer stated. "Those who, although deluded, still possess a general idea of divinity are scarce in these days, the majority show great ignorance in discussing religious worship." Actually this decline of the intellectual standards in the Dukhobor doctrine was reflected in an excess of symbolism and the uncritical acceptance of dogmas, the clue to the understanding of which had been lost. At least we get such an impression from the old Dukhobor Catechism.

Thus the compromises between the ideal and actuality which the Dukhobors attempted resulted in a deterioration of both their religious life and their doctrine. At the same time the compromise with the old Sectarianism led to the formation of new sects of a more moderate character along the lines of Evangelical Christianity.

This development started among the less intellectual Sectarrians of the Tambov province. One of their members, Simon Uklein, the son-in-law of Pobirokhin, began to doubt the validity of the Dukhobor doctrine. The Holy Scriptures were of secondary importance to Spiritual Christians, since the inner revelation came first, for the former was a dead and the latter a living word. "There is much in the Holy Scriptures that may suit one and much that suits another, so we have accepted what is appropriate to us," the Dukhobors said at an investigation. The pious Uklein, who had studied the Bible, did not approve of this liberal attitude towards the Scriptures, and when Pobirokhin declared his intention of pronouncing judgment on the universe, he entirely lost faith in his father-in-law and severed all relations with him. From then on the Bible was for him the indispensable and only foundation of religion. So he passed from Spiritual to Evangelical Christianity.



and found among the adherents of Tveritinov a considerable number of followers, who came from all parts of Russia. Here was good material for Uklein's new sect. This sect could never be described as pure Evangelical Christianity, for Uklein had reached his convictions through his own reasoning and he modeled his theory upon the sources that were immediately available. Treading in the footsteps of his predecessors, the Khlysty and Tambov Dukhobors, he elected seventy "Apostles" and accompanied by them made a solemn entry into Tambov. For preaching as he did, Uklein was put into prison, but upon feigning to have embraced Orthodoxy he was soon set free. After that he began to propagate his creed on a much larger scale, visiting the people of evangelical leanings in the neighboring provinces of Voronezh and Saratov. In the latter his preaching was so particularly successful that he made it the center of his further activities. Having traveled from the district of Balashov to Kamyshin on the Volga, he went down the river and on the way established several centers of his sect.

Uklein realized the possibilities of a bountiful existence in the steppes of Astrakhan, free and remote from priests and authorities. He led his followers there, and soon they had a colony on the Akhtubia similar to that of the Dukhobors in Molochnya Vody, and another on the Irgiz. At the same time the doctrine began to spread rapidly too on the right bank of the Volga in the provinces of Simbirsk, Penza, Orel, and Riazan. Wherever Uklein and his disciples appeared, they presented a written confession of their creed, and the children were made to learn by rote the "Ritual of the Spiritual Christians." Thus in a few places the doctrine was preserved unchanged for a whole century.

For the most part the contents of the Ritual, regarding the renunciation of the churches, icons, divine service, fasts, the spiritual conception of the sacraments, and the idea of resurrection "in a new body," were borrowed from the tenets of the Dukhobors. Yet the followers of Uklein dared not interpret allegorically the principal Christian dogma, and left the Orthodox meaning to the conception of the Holy Trinity. Each thesis in the Ritual was followed by an extract taken from the most significant parts of the Bible, and in this manner the doctrine was placed under the protection of the Holy Scriptures on which it had been based.

The Orthodox had named Uklein's sect the "Molokans" (Milk Drinkers), because its members drank milk on fast days. The rapidity of its growth showed that this doctrine was far more intelligible to the Russian people than that of the Dukhobors.

With the accession of Emperor Alexander I to the throne (1801), Spiritual Christianity grew in strength and progress. The persecutions, from which the Sectarians had suffered more than the Schismatics, ceased completely. Prisoners were released from prison and the banished recalled from exile. The Sectarians were allowed to leave the interior of Russia, where they had suffered from the persecution of local authorities and hostility of the population, and retire to the borderland provinces of Taurida, Astrakhan, and Samara, where they could lead a comparatively uncontrolled life. The priests were forbidden to interfere with the Sectarians, and the officials were ordered to prosecute only for "open insubordination to authority," propaganda, and "public demonstration of schism."

After 1812, when the Emperor became conversant with the Bible and fell under the influence of pietism, the government became frankly sympathetic to Evangelical and Spiritual Christianity. In 1813, on the initiative of the Bible Society of London, a Russian Bible Society was opened under the immediate patronage of Alexander I, while Prince Golitsyn, the Minister of Public Education and Ecclesiastical Affairs and a devoted pietist and mystic, was appointed its president. The uniting of the orthodox and heterodox creeds into a single department—and all of them with public education—illustrated the chief idea of those in power. According to this idea, the spirit of true Christianity was compatible with denominational differences, and public education should be based on Spiritual Christianity. In an article published in the *Zion Messenger*, edited by Labzin, a mystic and member of the Bible Society, it was written: "Christ never preached dogma or Sacraments, but only practical axioms that taught what should be done and what should be avoided." The Bible Society intended that these "practical axioms" of the Gospel, having become the foundation of public education, should be accessible to everyone. To this end the activities of the society were given wide publicity, and the provincial authorities were invited to join it and open local branches. The invita-

tion was taken as a governmental order, and "at once everyone began to show great enthusiasm for the word of God and a desire to enlighten those sitting in the shadow of death." The governors delivered speeches which sounded like sermons; provosts and mayors, captains and officers of the district police successfully spread the Holy Scriptures and reported on their progress to the authorities in writing pious letters, which abounded with religious quotations. The Sectarrians were under the impression that the government was converted to their views. The Molokans hastened to join the Bible Society and to buy the newly published Bible, while Labzin's *Zion Messenger* became a favorite with the sectarian readers. Simultaneously there also appeared new translations of the works of the Western mystics, Eckartshausen and Jung-Stilling.

Likewise an interest in Russian Evangelical and Spiritual Christianity was being shown by the upper circles of society. The Molokans and Dukhobors lived far from the capital, and only those who had an especial motive, like the English and American Quakers, who in 1817 after an audience with Emperor Alexander I went immediately to Molochnya Vody, acquired knowledge of their doctrines. But the Skoptsy and Khlysty were nearer the center, and as the dark side of their teachings were unknown to the public, they were regarded as true representatives of Spiritual Christianity. Following Conrad Selivanov's release from prison there was always an unbroken line of carriages in front of his house. People of high rank and the merchant class came to see the leader of the Skoptsy, and even the Emperor himself, before leaving for the battle of Austerlitz, visited him. Later it was said in St. Petersburg that Selivanov had foretold the defeat of the Russian army. Soon there appeared some imitators of the Russian Sectarrians among the aristocracy. Thus Colonel Tatarinov's widow, who was personally known to the Emperor, became a frequenter at Selivanov's until she discovered that he called himself the "Redeemer." After that a select group of people, who were seeking "to arrive at a consciousness of Truth, and to find the Kingdom of God and his Verity," met at Mme Tatarinov's home for spiritual discussions and readings. Among these were Prince Golitsyn and Labzin, several generals with their wives, colonels, old and young princesses, and many who had left Selivanov to join her. The meetings soon

bored these people, who missed the vigils, and Mme Tatarinov allowed them to introduce the vigils in her home. At first the popular songs, the whirling and mumbling of the Prophets shocked the nobility, but in a short time they "scornfully set aside all wisdom and discretion," decided "to become fools for the sake of God," and joined in the mad whirl. To their own astonishment they discovered that it was both pleasant and beneficial. Even the most unconcerned had to agree that "this type of exercise produced much perspiration, after which one always felt more ethereal and re-animating," while the faithful ones experienced "a rare calm, immunity from desire, and the peace of silent prayer." As to the more exultant, they felt a complete bliss and were "so carried away they forgot themselves, played, sang, broke out into jumping, whirling, and clapping their hands." Some even manifested the gift of prophecy. So Mme Tatarinov was unanimously proclaimed a Prophetess. Being thus introduced into the fashionable world, the Khlysty's ritual lost its peasant character. New songs were composed, and theoretical justification for the vigils was provided for. One of the members found in the *Conversations-Lexicon* a reference to a book *On the Sacred Dances of the Early Christians*, while others remembered that modern dances had ritualistic origin. They also read in the Holy Scriptures that when the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles, the uninitiated thought they were intoxicated, and that Apostle Paul had advised the faithful to hide from the unbelievers their gift of tongues, so that they could not be accused of folly. In this manner the intellectuals gave to the old Russian sectarian ritual a new theoretical basis.

In fact, the accord between the Sectarians and the intellectuals was not limited to the rehabilitation of the ritual, but with the help of the new mystical literature it contributed to the development of the doctrine itself. The results of this labor became in time the common inheritance of Russian Spiritual Christianity.

The further progress among the Dukhobors consisted in the advance of the masses towards the high level of the founders and leaders of the sect. The old catechism, which we have mentioned as an example of the backwardness of the rank and file of the Dukhobors, ceased to satisfy the demands of the community, and in more recent times was replaced by one that was considerably

altered. All the far-fetched allegories of the old version now were excluded, and in their stead the social side of the doctrine was advanced. Possibly the influence of Tolstoy had prompted the formulation of these parts of the catechism. However, the rejection of authorities, taxes, oaths of allegiance, and recruiting, was nothing new in the history of the sect. A Dukhobor from Kharkov had stated even as far back as 1793 that "the Lord created all men to be equals and no one to be superior," and that when the doctrine of the Dukhobors shall have spread over the whole world there will be no taxation. In 1801 the Dukhobors of that same province confirmed their intention of obeying no one but God, and declared that they would pay no taxes, and in case of foreign aggression would not defend the fatherland. Thus the influence of Tolstoy only revived the original views of the Dukhobors and helped to spread them among the masses. We shall see how these new or renewed tenets were put into practice.

Because of its moderate character the doctrine of the Molokans survived unchanged throughout the nineteenth century, and they were able therefore to propagate their creed among the people, who were not so strict in their religious requirements. Nevertheless, with time the intensity of religious interest within the sect naturally abated.

To replace the Molokans—though quite independent of them—there appeared a new doctrine, somewhat similar, but strong in its novelty, its readiness for struggle, and zeal for propaganda—Stundism.

Early in the eighteenth century the German Evangelical and Reformed Societies, the members of which were dissatisfied with the regular church service, held meetings called the "Stunde" at which the Holy Scriptures were read and hymns were sung. A strong religious unrest among the German colonists in Bessarabia and the province of Ekaterinoslav preceded the spread of Stundism, which had been introduced by them into Russia. In the forties and fifties of the nineteenth century two new sects were founded in these regions—the "Nazarenes" and the "Huepfer"—which proceeded with their vigils as a protest against the weakening of religious fervor among their brethren, the Mennonites. The religious fanaticism of the new sects became contagious and ex-

tended to the neighboring Russian population. The most propitious years for idealistic propaganda were the eighteen-sixties. "When freedom, life, and activities were discussed everywhere," says the Rev. A. Rozhdestvensky, a student of Stundism, "when the influence of the spirit of liberty had reached the people; when with the general enthusiasm and self-assertion the interest in religious questions that were closest to their mentality had increased among the masses; when in place of the German propagandists of Protestant creeds there appeared German fanatics of various shades of Sectarianism, the mind of the populace, having received no support from the local, still uncultured, clergy, could no longer withstand the influence of sectarian ideas."

Stundism multiplied rapidly in the provinces of Kherson and Kiev, but in the seventies it came again under the foreign influence of the Baptist preachers from Bessarabia and Transcaucasia. Quite a number of Stundists decided to adopt the new baptism, and at the same time they were systematically organized under the guidance of "Presbyters." Stundo-Baptism was successfully growing and, according to the data of the Missionary Convention, by 1891 it spread into more than thirty provinces. Its propagation was particularly strong among the kindred Molokans, who in the development of Stundism played a part similar to that which the Judaizers had played towards the Molokans a hundred years earlier.

From its inception the doctrine of Stundism had a dual character. "This religion was taken from the Holy Scriptures, from Spiritual Revelation, from the words of Jesus Christ, and from the Spirit of Prophecy," said one of its early teachers. That is, it bore at once the traits of both Evangelical and Spiritual Christianity. At first the Stundists were careful not to assume a hostile attitude towards Orthodoxy, but in the sixties they stressed the spiritual side. "We are not concerned about outward forms, for religion must be in the heart; the Saviour is the Shepherd of my soul, and no one else can be," they said in 1867, when the idea of "God's dwelling within us" was most vigorously expressed. "It is not I who work—it is God," said the peasant Onishchenko, a patriarch of Stundism, and another member of the sect demonstrated the advantages of his creed to an Orthodox thus. "Thou hast never seen thy God, but I, when I close my eyes, do see Him." The Stundists were also

inclined to believe that "once the Spirit had entered the soul, man could sin no more." However, the Evangelical point of view prevailed, through the influence of the Baptists

It was after 1869, when Unger, a German colonist, baptized Euphemius Tsimbala, a peasant from Karlovka, a village in the district of Kherson, that the Baptists became known in South Russia. Tsimbala, in his turn, baptized I. Riaboshapka, leader of the South Russian Stundists, who then baptized M. Ratushny, another leader, and they rapidly spread the Evangelical doctrine among the moderate members of Stundism. The Stundists, who previously had repudiated all "outer forms of religion" and renounced all "shepherds of souls" except Christ, now were baptized in the river and were forced to accept the presbyters. The accord of the Stunde and Baptism acquired a practical importance, when by the decree of 1894 the Stunde was acknowledged to be a "particularly pernicious" sect, and its members were prohibited from holding prayer meetings, while the Baptists were allowed to have their preceptors and were "free to profess their creed." Their wide connections, regular organization, and considerable financial means actuated the adoption of their doctrine by the Stundists, in whose midst there appeared an increasing number of missionaries and presbyters, who had acquired a regular theological education at the Baptist Seminary in Hamburg. However, under the influence of Pobedonostsev, a cruel persecution of the Baptists was started in the nineties, and by 1900 people of Russian origin were prohibited from calling themselves Baptists.

At the end of the nineteenth century, as a result of these persecutions, a section of the Stundists, renouncing the Evangelical principle, developed a new trend. It was not in the name of the "religion of the heart" or that of the "inner inspiration" that Evangelism was repudiated, but because of the "immutable and eternal laws of nature," in the light of which every positive religion was "the creation of man." This formulation of ideas shows the unmistakable influence exerted upon the Sectarians by the intelligentsia. Having grown indifferent towards the "word of God," the "Neo-Stundists" became interested in lay literature; newspapers, magazines, and various books were brought into their meetings, and their criticism was directed, this time, specifically against the existing social and

political régime. Governmental officials were "live idols" or even "devils." There was no need for authorities, punishments, or prisons; on earth there could be but one power—the Lord's. With the establishment of the new order, the land was to be confiscated from the landowners by the peasantry, and all the stores opened for the general and gratuitous use of the people. Everyone would have to live in fraternities, work would be communal, and commerce would be replaced by bartering in commodities. The influence of the intelligentsia was again very apparent in the social side of the doctrine.

The fluctuations of the South Russian Stundists between the "inner inspiration" and the Holy Scriptures had a curious parallel in those of the kindred Sectarians in northern and central Russia, where the latest movement had started with a distinctly Evangelical expression. It emanated from the drawing-rooms in St. Petersburg, which in 1874 had been inspired by the preachings of Lord Redstock. Two years later there was established a Society for the Encouragement of Spiritual and Ethical Reading, which continued until 1894, and published in addition to a Russian translation of the Bible several hundred diverse pamphlets, each printed in thousands of copies and sometimes reaching as many as twelve editions. In 1880, V. A. Pashkov, the principal organizer of the movement, having difficulties in arranging his meetings in St. Petersburg, decided to transfer his teaching from the capital to the central provinces of Russia. In 1884 he went abroad, but until his death in Paris in 1902 he kept in touch with the many fraternities of his followers, the "Pashkovists," which were established in various parts of Russia. The Reformed Church's doctrine on salvation through faith was taken as a basis for their propaganda in St. Petersburg, but as was formerly the case with Tveritinov, the principal dogma of Protestantism was somewhat obliterated by the unskilled theologians from among the workmen and artisans who were introducing Pashkov's ideas to their villages. With them the ethical part of the doctrine and the repudiation of the Orthodox ritual came to the forefront, while the doctrine of salvation through faith assumed the form of a belief, according to which "those redeemed" by Christ, being "bearers of grace," were "holy and impeccable" and had within themselves the "Holy Spirit." Here we find the



same phenomenon which occurs repeatedly in the history of Russian Sectarianism. The intellectuals endeavored to keep the movement within the bounds of Evangelical Christianity, but as soon as the doctrine was preached by the propagandists from among the people, it became at once either rationalistic or mystical and so approached nearer to Spiritual Christianity.

By the end of the nineteenth century this transformation of the Evangelical dogma on popular grounds met with obstacles in the more serious religious education of the Sectarrians and in the desires of the intellectual leaders of the movement to organize and merge the various trends of modern Russian Evangelism into a single community. The South Russian Stundo-Baptists and the Pashkovists of Great Russia attempted to arrive at a mutual understanding, and upon the initiative of V. A. Pashkov a convention of the representatives of both these trends and of the Molokans assembled in St. Petersburg in 1884. In the name of "Evangelical truth" illiterate Great Russian peasants, Ukrainians from Kiev, American missionaries, and Baptist presbyters met in the drawing-rooms of Princess L. and Count K. Because of the controversy over the question of the Baptist christening the proposed union was not realized, and subsequently the members of the convention were banished from St. Petersburg by the police. Nevertheless the Sectarrians did not give up the idea of a union, and in time the Baptists became its most active propagandists.

In speaking of Russian Sectarianism, it is impossible not to mention its most specifically mystical trend—the expectation of the Second Advent—which flared up periodically and was accompanied by high religious exultation. In its essence such intensity of mystical feeling could only be local and temporary, and was not characteristic of the general development of sectarian doctrines. Far more significant was the increasingly prominent part which the social element, due again to the influence of the intellectuals, played in latter-day Sectarianism. Not only did the social element play a prominent part in the theories of the Spiritual Christians, but both Kapustin's colony of the Dukhobors in the Molochnyia Vody and that of his successors in the Caucasus actually attempted to organize their life on communal principles. Subsequently a section of the Caucasian Molokans

worked for the immediate realization of the ideal of communal property. Popov, the founder of this sect of "Communals," having been exiled from the province of Samara to the Caucasus, and thence to Eastern Siberia, organized collective farming for his followers. The social element was also strongly felt in the doctrine of the Stundists. "In repudiating the existing order of Russian social and political life," wrote Rev. A. Rozhdestvensky, "they hoped to establish a completely new form of social existence." All people were equal, therefore "worldly possessions, such as wealth and land, had to be divided equally." The life of the people must be communal, they must subsist by their own labor and satisfy their needs by exchanging their products without the help of money. Whether or not to submit to the authorities, against the dictates of conscience, was a question which had been answered in many different ways. For some time the Dukhobors tried to solve the problem with the help of Tolstoy's doctrine, which, according to the *Missionary Review*, was very popular among them. At the end of the nineteenth century the Dukhobors attempted to realize the social ideal of Tolstoism by establishing in Canada a Christian society, whose members were to be united by purely ethical ties, free of any legal element both in their mutual relations and in their relations to the state. This was caused by the following events. When in 1886 Lukeria Kalmykov, the "Mother of God" and last representative of the Kapustin dynasty, died, she left young Peter Verigin as guardian of the community. But her legal heirs, with the assistance of the local authorities, tried to take possession of the collective property which had been under their unrestricted management. The Dukhobors contested this claim, but the authorities, being previously bribed, sided with Lukeria Kalmykov's heirs, and the struggle ended in a series of cruel floggings administered by the Cossacks. The position of the Dukhobors was further complicated by the moral change that took place among them at the time of the confiscation of their property. "Many brethren becoming rich forsook the original doctrine: drank wine, smoked tobacco, acquired personal property, and lending money claimed repayment," reads the testimony of a member of the sect. Presently they decided to relinquish the property in question, assembled, and divided all their money equally; live stock and clothing were also distributed; in

common they cultivated the land and everyone reaped from the harvest "as much as he needed," while the remainder was sold and the profit spent on communal requirements. In returning to a "better life," they also "agreed among themselves, in case of war not to kill anyone but fire in the air or absolutely to refuse military service." This latter decision was carried into practice, and it was that especially which provoked governmental persecution. Since they could expect no justice from the government, the Dukhobors became completely disillusioned and resolved "not to be the slaves of mortals" and never to obey the authorities. Thus a mood developed among them which was very favorable to the propagation of non-resistance, the doctrine which Peter Verigin met with at the beginning of the nineties. Verigin's party decided to "forsake the grounds of evil and coercion" and "to return to those of a life of freedom and conscience." In 1895 the most uncompromising of these followers of Tolstoy changed the old name, "given by the Russian authorities to their ancestors," for a new one, and instead of Dukhobors, they began calling themselves "Allbrethren," which "indicates that we are sincerely striving to be brothers to all men and are casting aside anything that might divide us."

As the result of the conflict between the state and the Sectarians many of the Dukhobors were banished that year (1895) to the districts of Transcaucasia, and in 1898-99, 7,400 of them, with the assistance of the Tolstoists, emigrated to Canada, where they chose the desolate regions with rough climate and fallow soil, so as to be isolated from the world and its influences. Yet even there they could not escape the claims made upon them by the state. They were liberated from military service, as there was no conscription, but Canadian laws did not admit the repudiation of property and actually refused to acknowledge communal ownership of the land.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the Dukhobors had to face such problems as the payment of taxes, registration of births, marriages, and deaths. In despair the Allbrethren decided to petition the Canadian government to free them from submission to the general laws, and to support their pleas they developed a new social-religious theory,

<sup>2</sup> Everyone had to sign personally the act of concession of his lot, which after three years of possession was to become private property, while at the same time they all had to swear their allegiance to the King and to become British subjects.

resembling closely the Wanderers' doctrine of Euphemius. Not wishing to accept land as personal property, they stated openly that "ownership of land is a breach of divine law; the desire to possess land is the principal cause of wars and strifes, and its possession is not necessary to the people, but to those who rule them; not to the working class, but to the gentlefolk who want to have servants and laborers." Concerning marriages and registrations in governmental books, the members of the "Universal Brotherhood" declared:

We do not like to subject our matrimonial affairs to the laws of man, which are incapable of discerning their true legality, but we wish to keep them exclusively within the province of the Lord and human conscience, we do not wish to give information regarding our newborn and our dead, that would subject us to man-made laws in our matrimonial, proprietary, and other worldly relations, but desire to preserve in our life the simplicity and strength of conscience which were bequeathed to us by our forebears.

The Allbrethren formulated their attitude towards the state and its requirements as follows:

Subjection to rules and laws which are based on compulsion and which interfere with the arranging of one's life according to a free conscience is detrimental to man, therefore we reject all civil rights and duties established by state legislation and intend to be guided in life solely by the promptings of our moral sense.

In replying to this theory of Christian anarchism, the Canadian government pointed out that the Allbrethren lived in Canadian territory on equal terms with other members of society, and that on becoming in three years citizens of the country, they could try to attain their aim through active participation in state legislation. But they should not count on being released from the general laws in operation or expect that special laws would be promulgated for them, as the government had no authority to grant such concessions. The Allbrethren insisted that the method indicated by the government for the achievement of their desire was to them equal to "renunciation of that very desire." In February 1901 they issued a proclamation "To our fellow-men in all the countries," in which they exposed their negotiations with the Canadian government and also inquired. "Does there exist anywhere a community in

which we would be tolerated and could settle and subsist," while upholding the principle of Christian anarchism? In the meantime they requested permission of the Canadian government to stay in Canada "until they found another country in which to settle or until convinced that for people who intended basing their lives on Christian principles there was no place on earth." Thus in the natural course of events the Dukhobors were confronted with the chief inconsistency in the very conception of Christian anarchism. The theorists of non-resistance on principle repudiated the law and the state, yet their social utopia could be attained only with the support of the state and under the protection of the law. L. N. Tolstoy wrote to the Canadian Dukhobors, encouraging them to remain loyal to the repudiation of property, emphasizing that once having acknowledged property it would be impossible to avoid the necessity of its organized protection by the government, i. e., of organized coercion.

Without violence or murder no one would be able to hold property. If we retain property without committing violence, this is only because it is actually protected by a threat of coercion . . . held over the people surrounding us . . . Therefore if you have accepted the property that is maintained only by military and police service, you must not refuse military and police service. Those who perform military and police duties while possessing property behave better than those who will not accept these duties and yet want to profit by property; such people want to evade service, while availing themselves of the service of others.

However, the grim necessity of struggling for existence in a foreign country had prevented the Sectarians from following Tolstoy's advice; they simply would not "regard the results of their labor as not their own, nor would they share them with those who did not work." A year after their emigration to Canada, out of the thirty-four communities there were only two or three where collective farming and property were still preserved. We find in the *Missionary Review* that during 1901 about fifteen hundred well-to-do Dukhobors were ready to appropriate the allocated plots as individual property and also to register marriages, whereas the poorer elements held to their principles and would sometimes amaze the Canadians by their efforts to break with the state and

community. In order to bring the Dukhobors to their senses, the Canadian government brought over their old leader, Peter Verigin, who in 1903 had returned from his exile in Obdorsk. When in 1924 Verigin was killed by a bomb which exploded on a train near Diamond, British Columbia, his son openly declared that this was done at the instigation of the Bolsheviki, who were displeased with Verigin for persuading the Dukhobors not to return to Russia. However, some hundred families did return to Russia, but in 1928 were back again in Canada. During 1920, almost fifteen thousand Dukhobors, who had remained in Russia, together with the Molokans, were transferred from the Caucasus to Salsk, a district which had belonged previously to the Cossacks.

An example of the philosophical trend among modern Sectarrians can be cited in the doctrine of Kozin, a former Khlyst, whose followers, the so-called Neo-Khlysty, accepted human reason as the only source of their tenets. In their opinion, God is the prime mover of the animal world only, for in the inorganic world there is no God. "Dwelling in all that moves," God does not exist apart from the world. In unequal parts He permeates all branches of the animal world, but as God He knows Himself only in man, and more specifically only in that high manifestation of human reason which is represented by the Neo-Khlysty.

It remains to ascertain the number of the followers of the Schism and Sectarrianism in Russia. The masses were inclined to join either one or the other of these trends. The chief obstacles were, on the one hand, the low cultural standard of the people and, on the other, the rigorous protection given the established church by the government. Burning at the stake, which was practised during the reigns of Tsar Alexis and Tsarevna Sophia was gradually done away with and was replaced by Peter with official registration, high taxation, and the deliberate social degradation of the Schismatics. The Emperresses who succeeded Peter renewed the persecutions, but beginning with Peter III and up to the time of the death of Alexander I, there ensued for the Old Ritualists and Sectarrians a period of comparative calm and progress. In 1783-85 all restrictions against the Schismatics were abolished, but nevertheless the government was slow in granting legal sanction to their priests, divine services,

churches, chapels, and cemeteries. The registration of Schismatics as a separate class was abolished, and the unsuccessful attempts to obtain statistical data on them were abandoned under Catherine II and the still more tolerant Alexander I. A new change came with Nicholas I, when the name of Schismatics appeared once more in official documents, and the concessions were again canceled. Marriages without the church ceremony were banned, and children were ordered to be baptized. Another and stricter census was ordered, and the burden of collecting this information was placed upon the police, who incidentally discovered in it a fresh source of income. As the persecutions abated the dissenters grew in number, but it was impossible to obtain definite data regarding their growth. Not until the liberal years of Alexander II was a new attempt made to revise legislation on the Schism and to determine the number of its followers. A special commission, headed by Melnikov, the greatest expert on Schism, was sent to the provinces and quickly discovered that the official figures were ridiculously inaccurate. For example, in the province of Nizhny Novgorod, according to local reports, there were 20,246 Schismatics and Sectarians, whereas the commission accounted for 172,600. In the province of Kostroma the official figure was 19,870, while the commission found 106,572, and in that of Iaroslavl the official total was 7,454, but the correct number was 278,417. Thus instead of the official figure for all of Russia—910,000—there were found to be ten million. Undoubtedly even the figures obtained by the commission were too low, for the Bishop of Nizhny Novgorod gave the figure for his province as 233,323 instead of 172,600. I. Aksakov, a member of the commission, even found that "in the province of Iaroslavl the Orthodox formed a fourth part of the population," thus bringing the number of Schismatics and Sectarians to 672,687 instead of 278,417. The discrepancy between the official and actual figures resulted from the mutual interest of the police and the clergy in concealing the real number of Schismatics. Both found in it a source of revenue, but the clergy, aside from this, feared to divulge the actual figures, since it could bring a reprimand from the higher authorities for inadequate vigilance. They generally presented the figures for the previous year, decreasing them somewhat to prove their zeal. However, it soon became useless to conceal the true

number of the dissenters, and in 1863 the Ministry of the Interior accepted the total of 8,220,000, which figure it distributed among the different sects as follows

Priestists	5,000,000
Shore-Dwellers	2,000,000
Theodosians	1,000,000
Molokans and Dukhobors	110,000
Khlysty and Skoptsy	110,000

Students of the Schism had no difficulty in proving that these figures too were incomplete, especially the last ones. The Ministry of the Interior itself estimated that there were in the single province of Tambov 200,000 Molokans alone, and Melnikov asserted that the sect of the Saviour's Union, with a creed something between the Priestless and the Priestists, supplied an additional 700,000. The Khlysty and Skoptsy had special reasons for seeking refuge with the Orthodox, since their sects were considered "particularly pernicious." To sum up, the total number of Schismatics and Sectarians towards the beginning of the eighties amounted to no less than ten million, while during the eighties there was an exceptional increase in the adherents to both old and new sects. Therefore, in 1880, Iuzov raised the figures to between thirteen and fourteen million, which he distributed among various groups as follows:

Priestists	3,640,000
Priestless	7,150,000
Khlysty	65,000
Spiritual Christians	1,000,000
Unassigned	1,145,000
Total	<u>13,000,000</u>

While these figures are not exact, one can detect in the period between 1860 and 1880 a mass transition towards the more radical trends of Sectarianism, from the Priestists to the Priestless, as well as a progress of the Spiritual Christians. After this the statistics again become more complicated, because of the hostile attitude towards the dissenters during the twenty years of K. P. Pobedonostsev's control of the Synod. On May 3, 1883, Alexander III issued a decree in which civil rights and freedom of divine service were granted the Schismatics so long as there were no outward mani-



festations of schism, but it was never put into practice because of the policy of the Procurator of the Holy Synod. Persecution was particularly cruel for those who lured the Orthodox away from their faith to schism, while the missionaries and clergy were generously rewarded for converting Schismatics and Sectarians to Orthodoxy. No wonder that in the census of 1897 the total number of Sectarians and Schismatics registered 2,135,738 persons of both sexes, when in fact by 1900 it must have reached 20,000,000 and by 1907, 25,000,000, considering the increase in population. In this calculation the influence of propaganda has not been reckoned with, although after the downfall of Pobedonostsev, early in 1903, it must have grown considerably. On February 26, 1903, Emperor Nicholas II proclaimed freedom of conscience, and in the decree of December 12, 1904, under the pressure of public opinion, promised a revision of legislation on the Schism. The Old Ritualists insisted that this name should be substituted for the official designation of Schismatics, that their parishes and places of worship should be permitted to exist openly, and that those who, against their will, had been registered in the official documents as Orthodox could register their children as Old Ritualists. (Actually they evaded registration: thus in 1889-1903, out of 29,431 Old Ritualist marriages only 1,840 were registered, and of 131,730 births only 552 were entered in the books.) They fought for the right to conduct their own primary schools, and protested against receiving religious instruction from priests of the established church at secondary schools. They also asked that their priests be exempted from military service and that civil and military positions be open to their laymen. With the decree of April 4, 1905, the Old Ritualists were given the right to this name and their position made equal to that of the Catholics and Lutherans, whereas the Sectarians and especially the "particularly pernicious" sects obtained no privileges.

After the establishment of the Duma in 1906 the question of religious toleration was subjected in this form to its jurisdiction. The government intended to postpone the realization of religious toleration, and it was obvious that the governmental committee, in charge of this question, was inclined to curtail the practical application of the principle. An unsatisfactory bill was presented by the government for the consideration of the Third Duma, but here

it met with liberal views on the subject, which were shared not only by the opposition but also by the parties of the majority. As a result, the bill on religious toleration was passed by the Duma in a greatly improved and expanded form. Nevertheless, the majority of the Duma hesitated to legalize the extra-confessional status and in general did not want to overstep the line that divided a confessional state from a state accepting the principle of separation of church and state. The February Revolution of 1917, having proclaimed complete freedom of conscience, had no time to introduce necessary legislation, and yet under the Provisional Government the Sectarians actually enjoyed absolute freedom.

When the Bolsheviks replaced the Provisional Government and proclaimed every religion harmful to the people, this freedom again became questionable. The Sectarians too were threatened by this point of view. However, in struggling with the established church, which it regarded as the most reactionary, the Soviet government needed allies from the ranks of the faithful. At first it attempted to find them inside the Orthodox church, but it soon became clear that, even with their assistance, it was impossible to attain a complete reform of the church. As compared with any liberal elements in the Orthodox church, Sectarianism possessed for the Soviet government unquestionable advantages, because of the radicalism of its doctrine and its social views, which sometimes resembled those of the Communists. The Thirteenth All-Union Communist Congress decided to assume the following attitude towards Sectarianism

We must pay the greatest attention to the Sectarians, who under the Tsarist régime suffered persecutions and some of whom are very active. By assuming a reasonable attitude towards them, we must win over their most energetic and cultured elements to serve our purpose. Considering the great number of Sectarians, this is a matter of the utmost importance. The problem must be solved according to local conditions

By special legislation the Sectarians, who objected to military service, were permitted instead to serve in hospitals, preferably those for contagious diseases. The People's Court was instructed to decide upon every individual case after a most careful examination. Only those sects which had objected to military service during

the Tsarist days and in consequence suffered persecution were granted exemption. In the course of time these cases became less and less frequent, and by the end of the nineteen-twenties religious persecutions extended even to the Sectarians.

While it still was in force, the Baptists in particular benefited from the privileged status granted the Sectarians. The Molokans, the Stundists, and the Pashkovists, all closely related to Evangelism, had succeeded in forming a union, which they had previously attempted. The Baptist church in Soviet Russia is officially separated from the Union of Evangelical Christians, which is guided by Prokhanov, but the doctrines of the two bodies are very similar. Some members of the Molokans have joined the Methodists.

As to the numerical growth of Sectarians under the Soviet régime, that question remains unanswered. Hypothetically, at the time of the revolution the total number of Schismatics and Sectarians was assumed to be 25,000,000, whereas actually the Sectarians alone, according to their own reckoning, numbered 6,000,000.

In summing up, we must emphasize respectively the fundamental differences in the character of the Schism and of Sectarianism. Being the guardian of tradition, the Russian Schism appealed exclusively to such social groups as the peasantry and the merchants, while Sectarianism, as an expression of unsatisfied religious needs, was common to the intellectuals and the masses. From beginning to end of sectarian history there has been a constant exchange of ideas between the upper and lower strata of society. Contrary to a widely accepted theory, the chief source of this mutual intercourse lay not in the similarity of social conceptions, but in the identity of religious and philosophical ideas and in the common sentiments and views concerning the nature of faith. The similarity of social ideas was rather the result of this identity of religious psychology.

An equally significant difference can be observed in the historical development of both the Schism and Sectarianism. Upon the subject of "hierarchy established by God" the Russian Priestists throughout all their history have moved in a vicious circle. Having reestablished such a hierarchy in accordance with their beliefs, they returned to the initial point, i. e., the immobility in which the official church was entrenched. The Priestless, on the contrary, had once and for all broken with the church hierarchy and the sacra-

ments in order to attain the same purpose—to preserve immutable the tenets of ancient faith. Thus having repudiated the form, while still holding strictly to the content, which was connected indissolubly with that form, the Priestless found themselves faced by an internal contradiction. As a temporary phase this situation could be explained, but it became unbearable when it proved to be permanent. In spite of reality, the Priestless were forced to uphold at any cost the ancient theory on the transitory character of their doctrine. Eventually this proved to be impossible, and the only alternative was to accept a new rationalistic foundation in place of the old traditional denial of the hierarchy and the sacraments. But in choosing this path the Priestless inevitably approached the point of view of the Sectarrians.

Sectarianism had never been in any manner handicapped by ancient theories or dogmas, therefore its religious teaching did not remain as immobile as that of the Priestists, neither was it such a departure from the initial point of view as that of the Priestless. Quite the contrary, it continued to progress with frequent renewals of religious forms and gradual deepening of the doctrine. Up to the present the development of religious ideas among the Sectarrians has followed two separate paths—that of the Evangelical and that of Spiritual Christianity.<sup>3</sup> Evangelical Christianity was introduced into Russia by such intellectuals as Tveritinov, and when later it reached the masses, assuming in some instances the form of Judaism, it was refreshed by contact with the Dukhobors in the second part of the eighteenth century. The result of this contact was the sect of Molokans, who profited by the prepared ground for the propagation of their doctrine. In the second half of the nineteenth century the ideas of Evangelical Christianity were again revived by the Mennonite and Baptist preachers, under whose influence Russian Evangelism assumed a new form—Stundo-Baptism. In the more auspicious conditions of the twentieth century it became in this form a favorable ground for the successful propaganda of both the Baptists and the Methodists.

However, during the entire period of its existence Russian

<sup>3</sup> This division seems more natural than the more frequent one into rationalistic and mystical sects, for rationalism and mysticism are parallel in the progress of Russian sectarianism and often are combined in the same sect

Evangelical Christianity has shown a tendency to approximate Spiritual Christianity, the origin of which must be traced to native and popular sources. Having emanated in the last part of the seventeenth century from the religious agitation which also created the Priestless, Spiritual Christianity in its early days kept close to the Schism. In repudiating church forms it introduced others adopted from old national customs, and in the first part of the eighteenth century it took on an intermediate form represented by the Khlysty. Conforming to popular understanding, the cult played a prominent part in this sect, while the presence of the Spirit was confined to the elect, the Christs and the Prophets, and was imparted to the others only during the vigils. The singular conversion of the strictest Khlysty into Skoptsy, which took place late in the eighteenth century, had no great influence on the development of Spiritual Christianity. Far more important was the simultaneous appearance of another, more purely spiritual sect—the Dukhobors—which took a definite shape at the end of the century. At its inception, the doctrine of the Dukhobors was strongly spiritualized by its intellectual and learned leaders, and therefore could not be instantly assimilated by the masses in that pure form. That is why, having first revived the evangelical doctrine, it then degenerated, for a time, into a new symbolism. Only gradually, towards the end of the nineteenth century, under the influence of Tolstoy, did the Dukhobor doctrine in its purer form become the property of the masses.

## VII

# THE DESTINY OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH

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THE entire process of development of the Russian popular faith, which we have studied thus far, took place outside the established church. Compared to the small group of outstanding members of the church, the Schism appeared retrogressive, but it was a great step forward in the religious consciousness of the masses, who until that time had been quite indifferent to the problems of faith. The Schism emphasized only the outward ritual, but it taught the masses to observe it in the spirit of an active religious ardor, which was foreign to them in earlier days and which aroused them from their secular apathy. Notwithstanding the bigotry of its leaders, the Schism for the first time awoke new emotions and reasoning powers in the people, and in fact this very bigotry made it easier for the Schism to become a popular creed. It was a very primitive faith, but that which remained outside of its sphere of influence was even more primitive.

In holding this point of view, we cannot accept the historical explanation, which ascribes the origin of the Schism to a popular protest against the restrictions introduced into the independent spiritual life of the parishes by the government. In those days the government had no reason for restraining the religious ardor of the parishioners. It is true that in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the practice of electing parish priests gradually had been replaced by appointment from the diocese, but this change cannot be ascribed to systematic governmental suppression. It was due to the lack of interest on the part of the parishioners, which be-

came even more apparent when those less indifferent abandoned the established church and joined the Schism. Thus religious indifference, while it was not the cause of the Schism, grew stronger inside of the church as a result of the secession.

Even at the time when it was still customary for the parishioners to elect their clergy, it was impossible that any spiritual bonds between the shepherd and his flock should ever be formed. The motives that influenced the elections were far more commonplace. To the people the priest was there merely to perform church ceremonies, and he was not required to possess either knowledge or talent for preaching, as it was only important "that the Lord's Church should not remain chantless and that Christian souls should not die without having first partaken of the Holy Sacrament." Usually the parishioners profited by their rights to elect a priest who was willing to accept a lower salary than all the others. Because of the apathy towards religious issues involved and the low standard of the ancient clergy, the office of the priest became a trade, while the social conditions prevailing in the Muscovite state tended to make it hereditary. At the beginning of the eighteenth century a typical priest of the day was questioned by St. Dmitry of Rostov:

Was it the desire for salvation that prompted thee to enter the priesthood? Not so, but the need to support thy wife, children, and kin. . . . Thou, hallowed one, examine thyself carefully when contemplating the priesthood. Dost thou seek salvation or sustenance for the body? Thou soughtest Jesus not for His sake but for that of a loaf of bread!

It was natural that in such circumstances the principle of parish election should weaken. But this did not imply that it should be immediately replaced by the principle of diocesan appointment. Church authorities were not anxious to assume the duty relinquished by the parishioners, and both sides let matters take their natural course. The result was the gradual establishment of a system under which ecclesiastical offices became hereditary, with one dynasty of clergymen ruling over the same parish for one or two hundred years.

This development led to the clergy being formed into a separate and secluded estate, in accordance with the general trend of Rus-

sian social life of that period. Free admission to the ecclesiastical ranks disappeared automatically when there developed a system of state service obligatory to all classes of Muscovite society. Although officially it was impossible to regard the care of souls as a state service, yet actually it became a state duty of one of the estates of the Muscovite state. This duty was not considered to be of great importance. In fact, the clergy found itself at the very bottom of the social ladder, and remained handicapped by this inferior social position throughout the whole of Russian history. No ecclesiastic or member of his family was admitted into any other class, while at the same time the government made every effort to reduce the number of clergy to a strictly indispensable minimum. The policy resulted, on the one hand, in a periodical increase of clergy, and on the other, in a purging of the ecclesiastical class of superfluous members, who were enrolled as privates and had to pay the poll tax. Only under Emperor Alexander II did the clergy cease to fear the eternal peril of "sorting" which had threatened their families from the days of Peter I to those of Nicholas I. Finally the decree of 1869 released the children of clergymen and church servants from the obligation of pursuing their fathers' calling.

However, the change could bring no instantaneous improvement to the social position of the class. In the days when a career in the church was open to everyone, men of the lower classes, subject to the poll tax, chose it by preference. In 1738, under Empress Elizabeth, the clergy were freed from the liability of the poll tax, but the other symbol of social inferiority—corporal punishment—threatened the priests until the time of Emperor Paul (1796), their wives until that of Alexander I (1808), and their children until the reign of Nicholas I (1835-39), while the church servants and their families were not exempt until the reform of 1863. The clergy were considered "a mean type of person" and were treated with disdain by the nobility, while among the peasantry they brought upon themselves the reputation of being extortioners. In turn they were exploited by the bishops, who in early days had treated them as serfs. Therefore it was impossible for the clergy to gain the respect of their parishioners as befitted their rank, and pecuniary conditions obliged them to remain the "ploughmen in cassocks," as they were



in the days of Pososhkov.<sup>1</sup> As early as the eighteenth century the government contemplated establishing for the rural clergymen fixed salaries and rates for the celebration of church rites, but up to the time of the Revolution of 1917 the problem remained unsolved.

Educational qualifications afforded no dividing line between the shepherd and his flock, since the parishioners, who elected the candidate, guaranteed in a signed petition only his ability to read and write. The candidate had to be examined in "religion and Christian law" before his ordination, at the Bishop's See. In Pososhkov's testimony we find that sometimes the examination consisted of only a few psalms recited by rote, so that the prelates were unable to verify even the literacy of the future priest. In the middle of the eighteenth century there began to penetrate into the serried ranks of the hereditary ecclesiastics a new element, the "learned" priests, "philosophers," and "theologians," all graduates of the seminaries. At first the invasion of these seminarians spread alarm among the aspirants of the old type, who according to law had to give way to them, but soon the difficulties were adjusted and the clergy adapted themselves to the new order. The ecclesiastical school did not abolish the hereditary character of the calling, established since the olden days, but on the contrary became a new, additional basis for the seclusion of the clergy. A theological education for the ecclesiastics was made compulsory by the decrees of 1808 and 1814, while to the people of other classes the access to the theological schools became more and more difficult. Thus the educational qualification ceased to be a privilege of the individual members of the class, and at the same time the equilibrium, which originally had been disturbed by the influx of a small learned force, was restored. But with education at the seminaries available to the entire ecclesiastical class, a still sharper line was drawn between the children of the clergymen, who were graduates of that school, and the laymen.

The clergy's educational qualification was raised above their material and moral standards, in which there had been no change since the time described by Pososhkov. "Had we been able to disclose all the abnormal phenomena in the existence of the clergy

<sup>1</sup> A Russian writer of the early eighteenth century.—Ed

during the eighteenth century," says I. Znamensky, "undoubtedly many of our contemporaries would have believed the realistic exposure to be a libel on the clergy of that time and would never have credited it."

The same distressing remarks can be repeated about the moral standard of that class during the nineteenth century. When in the eighteen-sixties the government deemed it necessary to ascertain the cause of the spread of the Schism and Sectarianism and brought this question to the attention of the governors of the provinces, it received many very discouraging accounts regarding the morals of the provincial clergy. For instance, Prince S. P. Gagarin, the Governor of Astrakhan, replied.

Our clergy are uncultured, uncouth, and needy, yet because of their origin and mode of life they stand quite apart from the people and exert no influence over them. The performance of priestly duties is marked by a constricted formalism. The priest officiates mechanically at the Mass, the matins, the Te Deum, the Requiem, and other church rituals, and there his pastoral duties end. The Orthodox clergy never deliver sermons, never give instruction on faith or enlightenment on the first principles of true worship, therefore, the people remain ignorant of religion.

Struve, the Governor of Perm, wrote:

The Schism derives its power from the fact that the Orthodox clergymen exercise no moral influence over the people, that they are prejudiced, dull, and too strictly scholastic in their attitude. Their sermons are compiled from articles printed by ecclesiastical authorities instead of being object lessons in the social ethics of everyday life. In private life the motives of the clergy are mercenary and selfish, of which the masses are well aware, whereas in the Schism the success of the leaders depends largely on the high standard of their life and character.

To a large degree the weakness in the inner, spiritual life of the clergy and their congregations was due to the political part played by the established Russian church. Before the time of the political unification of Russia, the central ecclesiastical power possessed great importance and authority, and the church, headed at first by the Metropolitan of Kiev and then by that of Vladimir, was the visible symbol of Russian unity. The church ceased to play this important

part when the political unification of Russia became an accomplished fact and national representation passed from the highest ecclesiastical authority to the newly established secular power. Notwithstanding this, the church remained independent because the secular authority found its sanction necessary, and in return secured for it the ancient rights of its own jurisdiction and administration. The most significant result of the alliance between state and church was an exaltation of both by means of a religious-political theory, which sanctioned the national Russian power and placed it under the protection of a national religion. The state derived every benefit from this alliance, and at the same time preserved full freedom of action towards its ally.

Soon the state was forced to attack some of the national peculiarities of the Russian church to which in earlier days it had given its special protection. In the sixteenth century the consciousness of its national distinctiveness was the Russian church's chief source of strength, and from it emanated the proud belief in the world mission of Russian Orthodoxy, while in the seventeenth century this sense of distinctiveness was admitted to be a deviation from the right path. Efforts were made to prove that the supposed antiquity of the Russian church was, in fact, of recent origin, and what was regarded by the zealots of the national faith as an unforgivable innovation was in reality the ancient tradition. The representatives of the Russian church, who honestly believed that they had been preserving tradition, found themselves suspected of practising religious improvisation, the results of which were condemned. The Russian church was forced to disprove that which it had considered the most significant part of the national faith, and this abrupt separation from the old belief proved to be fatal to the official church. Within its fold there remained the small minority who had outgrown the old faith, and all those indifferent to religion, while the rest remained true to the old faith, so that the church's victory was followed by the loss of many members. The withdrawal of the zealots of antiquity had weakened the religious fervor of those remaining in the fold of the church just at a time when its former ally, the state, had reached the highest development of its power.

The results were soon obvious. With internal dissension, de-

prived of its traditional spiritual contents, having incited the most ardent members of its former congregation against itself, and being forced to rely on the cooperation of the secular authorities in this struggle, the Russian church surrendered itself completely to the government. Even if there had been no Schism in the seventeenth century, the church probably could not have retained the remnants of its ancient privileges in the face of the omnipotent Moscow power, but the advent of the Schism greatly accelerated its ultimate subordination to the state.

But in the early part of the seventeenth century one could not foresee such an outcome. Under Patriarch Filaret, the father of Tsar Michael, the Russian church appeared to be stronger than ever. The edicts of the sixteenth century, which restricted the church's property rights, had not been enforced. The Patriarch, through his authority, not only destroyed the secular influence in the church but actually gained control over the government. In the administration of its internal affairs the church became literally a state within a state, having patterned its organization on state institutions. From the time of Patriarch Filaret, church administration, church courts, finances, and the Patriarch's household were placed under the control of several departments like those of the state. Only a theory which would furnish a legal basis for these conditions was lacking, and this Patriarch Nikon attempted to supply.

The Lord Almighty, when He created Heaven and Earth, bade two great lights, the Sun and the Moon, to shine upon the World, and through them showed us the authority of the Prelate and the Tsar. That of the Prelate shines by day, it has power over the souls. That of the Tsar is of the world his sword must be kept in readiness against the enemies of the Orthodox faith; the bishops and other clergy demand protection from injustice and violence, and this is the duty of the laymen. The laity need the clergy for spiritual salvation, while the clergy need the laity for protection against oppression. Neither spiritual nor secular authority is above the other, but both come from God.

Nikon's last non-committal conclusion contradicts his previous parallel of the respective authorities of the sun and the moon. In fact, he passes immediately from the moderate point of view to a purely ultramontane position: "It has been proved repeatedly that Prelacy is above Kingdom. Prelacy is not bestowed by the Tsars, but

the Tsars are anointed by the Prelates." The Patriarch made no effort to conceal the Catholic origin of his theory. "Why not acknowledge good in the Pope?" he asked one of his judges.

Time and circumstances were not favorable to the realization of the Papist theory in Russia. In the days of Filaret the exalted position of the church was due to particular conditions: the relationship of the Patriarch to the Tsar, the weak personality of Michael, and the temporary impotence of the state power. When this situation changed the state resumed its struggle against the old church privileges, and Nikon had to advance his ambitious theory in defense of the church against the claims of the state.

The problems that caused the strife between the church and the state were the same as in the sixteenth century. In spite of all prohibitions, the church continued to increase its landed property to the detriment of the state's interests, and retained its jurisdiction over the clergy in all matters until the government of Tsar Alexis took upon itself to limit both its economic and legal privileges. The further transfer of land to the church was strictly prohibited, and it was forced to return the estates which previously had been taxable land. Jurisdiction over the clergy in all civil cases was placed in a governmental institution, especially established for the purpose—the Department of Monasteries—and so, in Nikon's words, "the Lord's property and the Lord's tribunal were transferred in the name of the Tsar."

People still remembered the fearful anathemas with which the ecclesiastical authorities had threatened the spoliators of church property ever since the days of Joseph Volotsky, when similar threats were made by Nikon against the enemies of the Prelate's Court. The moral sentiment of the age was opposed to secularization, and the government had to bide its time before it could realize its plan. To the direct question submitted by the government—what was the Tsar's authority and should everybody, particularly the local bishops and the Patriarch, obey the reigning sovereign as their only superior?—the Ecumenical Patriarchs, who had condemned Nikon, gave a very guarded answer. "The Tsar is lord only of political affairs; the Patriarch must obey him in all political decisions." The state yielded, and the jurisdiction over the clergy in civil and even criminal cases was restored to the ecclesiastical

authority by the Council of 1667, while that of 1675 abolished the recently established Department of Monasteries.

But this triumph of the church was short-lived, because under Peter the Great, who was an outstanding champion of the state idea, the struggle came to a definite end. The old organization of the church symbolized for the sovereign all that in Russia was hostile to his reform, and he assumed towards it a determined attitude. The entire ecclesiastical policy of Peter can be summarized as a consistent development of two ideas—the elimination of the Patriarch, who could become a Russian Pope—"a second sovereign, possessing power equal or above that of the autocrat"—and the subordination of the church to the reigning monarch.

Who could possibly have opposed Peter's ambition? Those who on principle resisted secularization were mostly Schismatics, i. e., people fighting under a banner unfurled in frank opposition to the state. Among the clergy Peter replenished the ranks deserted by the resolute defenders of the ancient faith with new people, who had nothing in common with the former hierarchs, had no ancient church tradition, and no dreams of world mission assigned to Russian Orthodoxy. Thus, at the time when Peter launched his attack on the main position, the front-line defenses already had been captured. With the change of mood in the congregation and the replacement of the old priests by new ones, it was not difficult to introduce the idea of state supremacy into the organization of the church. The reformer, through his ally and intermediary Theophanes, strove persistently to impress upon the Russian mind the fact that the ecclesiastical order "was not a separate state," and that with all the others it must subordinate itself to state administration. "The governmental institution, by means of which the management of the church was incorporated into the body of the state administration," to quote Professor Znamensky, was the Holy Synod, a collegiate body which replaced the Holy Patriarch and was recognized by the other Eastern Patriarchs as a Brother. The chief motive which guided Peter in his reform, was candidly stated in the Church Regulation.

The fatherland need not fear from the synodical administration the same mutiny and disorder as occur under a single ecclesiastical ruler. For the common people, not knowing the difference between the spir-

itual and autocratic power, and being impressed by the greatness and fame of the supreme pastor, think him a second sovereign, possessing a power equal or even above that of the autocrat, and believe the church to be another and higher state. And if the people continue to think this, then what will occur when the sermons of the ambitious clergymen add fuel to the flame? Those of simple heart will be so perverted by this idea that they will respect the supreme pastor more than the autocrat, and if there is discord between the two, more sympathy will be shown the spiritual ruler than the secular. They will venture to fight or mutiny for his sake, and deceive themselves into believing that they are fighting for God Himself and that their hands are not stained but blessed by the blood they may shed. Such popular beliefs are of profit to those who are hostile to the sovereign, and they incite the people to unlawfulness under the guise of religious fervor. And what if the pastor himself through self-pride grasped the opportunity?

The Regulation recalls historical incidents resulting from such events in other countries as well as in Russia "But when the people understand that the synodical administration is established by monarchical decree and the decision of the Senate, they will be discouraged and will give up hope of winning the support of the church dignitaries by their riots."

In order to prevent the supreme ecclesiastical power from becoming the organ of anti-governmental tendencies, the Tsar found it necessary to convert it into a state institution, "established by monarchical decree and the decision of the Senate." It did not occur to Peter's practical mind that these actions could arouse canonical controversy. As Iury Samarin has it, "In the church Peter saw two different yet indissoluble elements the doctrine, about which he was unconcerned, and the clergy, whom he regarded as a special class of state functionaries entrusted by the government with the moral education of the people." This was also his conception of the Synod. Established by governmental decree and consisting of men appointed in each case by a special order of the sovereign, for a specified time, the Synod could act only as a superior administrative organ for ecclesiastical affairs. To emphasize its character as one of the central governmental departments, Peter appointed a man of his own choice as Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod to represent state interests. "Initially, the function of the Chief Procurator was practically one of observation," wrote Dobroklonsky, an historian

of the Russian church, "but in the course of time the sphere of his activities was extended, while his influence over the administration of the church also increased. In 1824 his position was made equal to that of the Ministers. . . . In 1836 he was invited to the State Council and the Committee of Ministers. . . . At the present time [1890], the Chief Procurator is something like a Minister of Church Affairs, a keeper of law and order in church administration, and the representative of its central body to deal with the supreme power and the central institutions of other governmental departments."

The important change introduced by Peter into the administration of the Russian church had not been accomplished without opposition on the part of church representatives. In 1718, the very year in which Theophanes had begun compiling the Church Regulation, the Paris theologians invited the Russians to discuss the question of church unification, and Stephen Iavorsky, the Keeper of the Patriarchal See and an opponent of Theophanes, in his reply to the invitation did not hesitate to express his doubts:

Had we been willing to rectify the evil [i e., the division], the Apostolic canon, which does not allow a bishop to act independently of his senior, particularly in such a serious undertaking, would stand in our way. As it is, the Russian Patriarchal See is vacant; and for the bishops to ponder over any question in the absence of the Patriarch is similar to the limbs of a headless body wanting to move or the stars following their course without an initial impetus. These extreme circumstances are depriving us of both speech and action.

We can see in this statement a wary objection to Peter and his planned reform.

The Tsar could have answered Iavorsky by pointing out that the character of the Eastern church made such a reform possible without infringing upon the church's rights. In fact, the Greek church needed no supreme organ of church legislation, because the creative period of its history had come to an end long before. Due to this the Eastern church was not faced with the question which caused so much trouble in the Western church how to deal with the problems not provided for or sufficiently developed in the writings of the Fathers of the Church and the resolutions of the Ecumenical Councils. No such problems could ever originate within the Ortho-



dox church, for to its representatives the spiritual wealth of the church was amply sufficient, and it was necessary only to protect it from plunder and destruction. It was in this sense that Metropolitan Seraphim of St. Petersburg, in his conversation with the English theologian Palmer, referred to the Eastern church as "having no development," and it was in this sense also that Iury Samarin asserted that "the Orthodox church had no system and must never have one." Compared to this fundamental immobility of the Eastern church, both Catholicism and Protestantism, as Khomiakov correctly pointed out, erred on the side of rationalism. For them church organization was really a vital problem, because behind it lay an even more important one, whose was the supreme authority in the further development of the dogma. But if such a development was not the church's aim, if its duty consisted merely in preserving intact the original tenets of faith, then its task and the problem of its organization were considerably simplified. Since it no longer occupied itself with religious creative work, the Eastern church was not in need of a legislative organ for that purpose or a supreme central authority such as the Western church required, because even failing a single power, as that of the Pope, it could rest assured that the unity of its doctrine would remain intact. Only current, purely executive work had to be done, and that could be attended to by any type of church institution.

That is why the Western church had to struggle over the problem of church organization, while the Eastern church had no such difficulties. It matters not where a Catholic lives, he always recognizes the supreme authority of the Pope; in his heart he remains forever an ultramontane, for his soul, bound by religion, must abide in Rome. How was one to reconcile religious duty with patriotism, and the obligations towards the Pope with those towards one's fatherland? In a word, how could the universal power of the church be reconciled with its national organization? Throughout the centuries a Christian of the Western ritual remained confronted with this dilemma, while to the Eastern Christian it did not exist. To an Orthodox the universal element in the church consisted in its spiritual contents, the tenets of the seven Councils, whereas the church authority, as the provisional guardian of these contents, could assume the form of any national, local, or temporary or-

ganization. A national authority could never conflict with the universal doctrine of the Eastern church, because the national churches had no power to introduce changes into the universal doctrine, and the universal doctrine had not been invested with power. Therefore the churches of the Eastern ritual could succeed easily where those of the Western ritual labored vigorously to attain a national independence in religious matters. In the West the introduction of such a national organization sometimes signified a complete change of religion, as actually happened in the Protestant countries. As to the Catholic countries, strenuous efforts had to be made before the local churches could be organized along national lines, and such efforts always were frowned upon by the true Roman Catholics. Nothing similar was to be found in the East, where creating new national churches had been a matter of policy. In the second part of the sixteenth century Russia was first to set an example which was followed later on by all the Orthodox states, as soon as they had established themselves politically. Greece, Serbia, Roumania, and Bulgaria now possess autonomous churches, which does not prevent their being members of the one Eastern church.

Thus, the nationalization of church organization—"Phyletism"—although at one time condemned by the Patriarch of Constantinople as a heresy, was the natural result of the conservative character of the Eastern church. From its negative attitude towards the development of the dogma, there ensued the purely executive type of its organization. By restricting themselves to the administrative function these organizations, without injuring the church, could join other moral-educational institutions of the state and, except in extraordinary cases, they were still able to satisfy the requirements of everyday church practice. In this manner, without obvious infringement on church rights, the reformer could transform its supreme institution into that of the state, and thereby subordinate the church administration to state control.

In consequence of this the fate of ancient church privileges was also settled. The state objected to leaving legal and administrative rights in the hands of the ecclesiastical authority, but it did not hesitate to surrender them to a governmental institution bearing the characteristic name of the "Synodal Body." Before long the clergy

were aware that their rights assumed the quality of rather burdensome duties. The revenues from church lands lost much of their value with the necessity for rendering strict accounts and the responsibility for punctual payment of assessments "It was natural," remarked Dobroklonsky, "that the Synod should feel the great burden of its administrative authority and responsibility." As Empress Elizabeth justly observed, in 1757, "The monasteries, having no power to make other disbursements except those authorized by the state, took unnecessary trouble in managing their estates."

Under these conditions it was only a question of time before the secularization of church property should be complete, and when it was accomplished, in 1764, it meant only a slight administrative change. Simultaneously, a new church budget was established which assigned the sum of 450,000 rubles for the support of the clergy. The total revenue from the church estates reached three times this amount, and twenty years after the secularization it grew to eight times the sum assigned for the support of all the Russian clergy. So two-thirds, and subsequently as much as seven-eighths, of the church revenue was confiscated and given over to the state. The only voice of protest coming from the Russian hierarchs was that of Arsenius Matseievich, which being solitary and belated only caused him to be punished as an example to others. The days of Nikon and Joseph of Volotsk were long since gone, but Arsenius wrote an epitaph for them, inscribing it in charcoal on the wall of his prison cell: "Blessed be Thou, for Thou hast brought me to humility"

The humility of the upper and leading stratum of the clergy, as displayed before the supreme power and its representative, the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod, remained a characteristic of the Russian régime up to the Revolution of 1917. Thus the Russian church organization was brought into harmony with the spiritual and ethical standards of the clergy and their congregations, and it remains to be ascertained only to what extent these standards corresponded to the church doctrine.

Here, as in the field of church organization, we face a situation arising from the general course of Russian history, as well as from the basic principles of the Eastern religious doctrine. While theological systems might be in error, the church had to be impeccable.

Therefore Iury Samarin came to the conclusion that the church should have no system, it should sanction no doctrine aiming at demonstrating logically the truth of revealed religion "In proving its own cause, the church oversteps its sphere and forfeits the possibility of presenting a correct definition. In the existence of the church lies its justification, and human reason with its questionings, doubts, and arguments should have no place in it . . . It is quite superfluous for those members of the church who recognize its divine authority to prove the dogmas." But the church had always acknowledged rationalism as being in no way contrary to its spirit, if it be used as an instrument of negation and defense against the enemies of the church. In accordance with this principle, Orthodox theology remained predominantly polemical and negative.

Such was the theology of ancient Russia. In dealing with matters of faith, the old ecclesiastical writers avoided an opinion as strenuously as in later days the Slavophiles shunned rationalism. Orthodox doctrines would be justified and strengthened by argumentation only when it was necessary to oppose and disprove the unorthodox theories. Consequently, in the sixteenth century it was considered sufficient to cite an appropriate text from the Scriptures and the writings of the Fathers without any further dialectical efforts or attempts at logical deduction. Such were the ancient Russian polemical works, which attacked the Latins, or the *Enlightener* of Joseph of Volokolamsk, or the sermons of Metropolitan Daniel. It was during the controversy over the christening of Prince Wolde-mar that Russian theology realized for the first time how inadequately it was armed against the more advanced Western theology, and that it had to seek new weapons of defense. Ivan Nasedka, the "home-bred" polemist, was totally incapable of following the thread of his opponents' skilful arguments, and he became utterly disconcerted by their philological proofs "Do not try to outwit us, Christ's flock, with your sophistry; we have no time to listen to your philosophies," was Father Ivan's final reply. To disprove the arguments of German theology, it was necessary to find more competent polemist, and the Muscovite government made a hasty choice in a Kievan monk, Isaiah. Although this choice proved to be an unsatisfactory one, the government was convinced that from the Kiev theology, which had been borrowed from the Catholic West,

it would gain practical benefit. From that moment a new, Catholic element penetrated the Moscow theology and gradually grew in strength. It is significant that the representatives of the new school appeared in public precisely at a time when the sentiments of the masses were more and more drawn towards the struggle for the old faith. The more indifferent the congregation grew towards their theological opinions, the more freely did the Russian hierarchs express them. Simeon Polotsky, the first outstanding theologian of the Kiev school, showed considerable restraint, while Sylvester Medvedev, his devoted and ardent disciple, was far more daring. Medvedev thought that his teacher was concentrating too much on the first, preparatory stages of a preacher's career, "reading and meditating on the Holy Scriptures," and that he was dilatory in producing the fruits of these studies "to teach the people what he had learned from the Lord." So he decided that his teacher's words "should be put into action," and soon after the death of Simeon Polotsky (1680), he began his propaganda, which both in its content and its ultimate result was characteristic of those days. In Russian theology the Catholic theory first appeared as applied to the question of ritual, and with its help it became necessary to defend the church practice already established in Moscow. A dispute arose at the beginning of the seventeenth century as to what moment in the Mass the transubstantiation took place at the words of Christ: "Take, eat, this is My Body," or when the priest said: ". . . and make this bread into the Holy Body of Christ." The answer to these questions should have interested everyone, since on it depended the exact moment for beginning and ending of ringing the bells, at which all the Orthodox people, wherever they might be, would worship the transubstantiation of bread. Sylvester Medvedev spoke passionately in support of worshiping and ringing the bells at the words of Christ, as established in Moscow and accepted, through St. Thomas Aquinas, by the Kievans, of whom his late teacher was one, while his opponents were trying to restore the Greek doctrine. These debates provoked great excitement even among the Old Believers, for the Greek doctrine, as in the days of the correction of books, appeared again as an innovation. Once more the masses sided with antiquity, but this time it was characteristically defended by the arguments borrowed from Western theology. This was

perhaps the first attempt at an independent theological discussion of a purely Russian religious problem. No wonder that "not only men, but women and children," everywhere and upon all occasions, "at feasts, in the market-place, at all times" discussed the "Holy Sacrament . . . at what words and moment do the bread and wine transubstantiate" It remained, however, the first and only attempt, because the Old Orthodox party of Moscow, headed by Patriarch Joachim, agreed with the Greek view and summoned all its strength to overcome the "heresy of bread worship." The strictly Orthodox and deeply religious Medvedev was implicated by the Patriarch in the political agitation of Tsarevna Sophia's adherents, and perished on the scaffold. The moment was not opportune for free religious discussions.

In the following generation circumstances had already changed. The "heresy of bread worship" was the last subject to provoke equally both upper and lower strata of Russian society. The ulterior fate of theological science in Russia demonstrated clearly how quickly their spiritual interests became divided

At the beginning of the new century the consequences and portents of this separation already were quite apparent, for the sporadic discussions of questions of ritual were replaced by complete theological systems, too abstract and involved to interest the masses. Problems were put in a broader, more daring way, and the indifference of the congregation provided the priests with greater freedom of expression. Russian theology of the eighteenth century arrayed itself in the garb of medieval scholasticism and began speaking Latin, thus ceasing to be the property of the people and becoming that of the scholars.

Stephen Javorsky was representative of the Catholic trend in Russian theology, and his *Rock of Faith*, written in refutation of the Protestant theories of Tveritinov and his circle, was adopted by the Catholic theologians. It was used by the Jesuit propagandists, and Ribera, the Dominican, defended it against the attacks of the Protestant scholars. In refutation of the *Rock of Faith*, Theophanes Prokopovich wrote a series of theological works, opposing to the Catholic authorities cited by Javorsky—Bellarmine, Becanus, and others—the Protestant theologians—Gerhard, Mosheim, and Chemnitz. These works were written in Latin and acquired fame

in the Protestant world, while his *Catechism* was translated into English and incidentally became instrumental in converting an English priest to Orthodoxy. From its inception the Scylla and Charybdis of Russian scholastic theology became apparent. Stephen Iavorsky was guided by the Catholic assertion that faith could be based only on tradition and that the Scriptures, being incomplete and in parts obscure in meaning, could be confirmed and explained only by church tradition, while Theophanes Prokopovich confronted this view with the Protestant doctrine that the Holy Writ, perfect both in completeness and lucidity, was the only source of faith, in itself proving its divine origin and authority. Iavorsky followed in the footsteps of the leading Catholic theologians and taught that, before the Fall of Man, human nature had not been without sin, nor was it entirely corrupted after Adam, therefore its downfall was its own, though excusable, sin, and its rise was its own free achievement. In opposition to this Prokopovich exposed the Protestant theory, according to which human nature was immaculate in the beginning and was perverted to its roots by the Fall of Man. In the Old Testament redemption was unattainable for the sinful man, because its prerequisite was a strict observance of the divine law, and only became possible when Christ conferred grace upon mankind. Accordingly redemption, which Iavorsky represented as a reward for good deeds, was to Prokopovich merely the result of faith bestowed by grace.

To the Russian theologians the systems of Iavorsky and Prokopovich were for a long time the milestones marking the field of their own discussions. They availed themselves freely of the intellectual treasures of Western theology to refute the fallacy of the Catholics with Protestant arguments, and vice versa. Their chief concern was to retain a balance between the two tendencies and to refrain from any independent attempts at theologizing.

It must be admitted that Russian theology did not easily attain the art of neutrality, and the leanings towards Catholicism acquired at school and imbued with scholastic rhetorical and dialectical methods continued for some time to dominate the theological education in Russia. Theophilactus Lopatinsky, a Kievan, brought this tendency from his city to the Academy of Moscow, and until the forties of the eighteenth century theology was taught there in a

strict scholastic manner by the method of St. Thomas Aquinas. But, in the opinion of the government, the doctrine of Theophanes had always prevailed, for the clever hierarch knew how to reconcile freedom of thought with the subjection of the church, and demonstrated to the authorities the practical advantages of his Protestant theories over the stubborn clericalism of Stephen Iavorsky and his followers. This contributed to the subsequent domination of the Protestant trend not only during the German reign of Empress Anna, when all Orthodox clergy were considered unreliable, but even under the "philosophically minded" Catherine II and the mystical Alexander I. At the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, the two famous hierarchs, Metropolitan Platon Levshin and Filaret Drozdov, Bishop of Moscow, were very outspoken in their Protestant sympathies. Filaret, in his youth, ardently supported the Bible Society and saw in its activities the approaching advent of the Kingdom of Heaven. This was when the people closest to the Tsar, like Speransky and Golitsyn, held views very similar to those of Spiritual Christianity, and the English Methodists, who cooperated in the establishment of the Bible Society, publicly expressed the hope that "in accordance with the wishes of the Tsar the Bible Society would reveal to the Greek church its errors, revive its faith, and thus begin reformation in Russia." Such enthusiasm naturally provoked strong resistance, and never before did the conservative character of the Eastern church stand out so clearly as it did during the reign of Emperor Nicholas I, who immediately upon his accession to the throne ordered the Bible Society closed.

For the purposes of instruction, in the four Theological Academies of Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kiev, and Kazan, which prepared the priests and teachers for seminaries, it was necessary to teach dogmatic theology without being restricted to polemical subjects. In fact, the entire theological literature of later days, that met with the approval of the official church, consisted wholly of manuals prepared for the purposes of instruction, or of dissertations presented for obtaining academic degrees.

Obviously such a situation could not satisfy the religious-minded intellectuals unhampered by officially established restrictions. In the middle of the nineteenth century there appeared in Russia a group



of lay theologians whose works were far more characteristic of Russian religious thought than those of the ecclesiastical writers. Contrary to the prevailing tendency of the Russian intelligentsia, inclined to repudiate positive religion, the lay theologians strove to remain within the bounds of revealed faith and of Orthodoxy in particular. Nevertheless, these "Seekers after God" introduced into their theological reasoning a new strain that did not harmonize with the traditional faith and therefore was regarded with suspicion by the church.

Characteristically, the impulse for the establishment of a lay theology in Russia came from abroad. The history of the Russian "Seekers after God" closely corresponds to that of the two important periods of Western romanticism, which exerted a strong influence over two different generations of Russian intellectuals. In the first of these periods the Western protest against the rationalism of the eighteenth century contributed to the formation in Russia of the original doctrine of Slavophilism, in which the Orthodox religion became an integral part of a general quest for the fundamental attributes of the Russian soul, and thus took on a strong national hue. In the thirties of the nineteenth century, the Russian romantics of that generation formed their views under the influence of Schelling and Baader and developed their doctrine in the fifties, when struggling against Hegelianism. In the eighteen nineties, the generation of the "Neo-Romanticists" was brought up on the ideas of the *fin de siècle*, and particularly on Nietzsche. Its return to religion was a protest against the naturalism and empiricism of the preceding generation, while the attitude of the younger members of this generation of the nineteenth century was greatly influenced by the revolutionary failures of 1905 and 1917. The same protest and influences will be observed in the history of Russian art.

The Slavophil A. S. Khomiakov (1804-60) is rightly regarded as the father of lay theology in Russia. The initial point of his doctrine was the statement made in 1848 by the Eastern Patriarchs in their reply to Pope Pius IX on the question of papal infallibility. "The infallibility rests solely in the universality of the church united by mutual love. Both the immutability of the dogma and the purity of the ritual are entrusted to the guardianship not solely of the hierarchy, but to that of all church members, who are the Body of

Christ." Instead of love, which was the basis of "conciliarity,"<sup>2</sup> the West revealed the pride of individual intellect. Thereby Catholicism created Protestantism, which in turn led the way to modern anarchy in religious thought, while the Eastern church embodied the principle of "conciliarity" in love. The "conciliar body" of the church, its living organism, alone preserved the roots of religious life and possessed the integral truth, unrestricted by Western rationalism and abstract philosophy. There was neither truth nor salvation outside the church, but only ignorance and sin, whereas in the church reigned the Holy Ghost, inaccessible to reason alone, but revealed to "human spirit in its entirety." The sacraments and the Bible were an outer, visible cover; in its essence "every text which the church, guided by the Holy Ghost, accepted as its own was a Holy Scripture," and the debates held by the Protestants on the Apostles' authorship of the Gospel and the Epistles did not alter the church's attitude towards them. If today the Epistles of Apostle Paul were repudiated, then tomorrow the church could say, "they are mine," and the Epistles would preserve their authority. Even the Ecumenical Council was not above the "conciliar conscience" of the church, the "church people" could repudiate its authority. Apparently this "conciliar conscience" of the church could not be expressed in any legal formula. The "human spirit in its entirety" was a mystical conception. Since its nature was universal, it had to be propagated throughout the world, and therein lay Russia's mission. The national religion thereby reassumed its cosmopolitan character.

Constantine Leontiev (1831-91), the staunch guardian of ancient Byzantine principles, strongly opposed Khomiakov's Orthodoxy, for he recognized in it a Protestant tone, which to him was incompatible with strict submission to church tradition. He repudiated likewise the ethically humanitarian side of Dostoevsky's and Tolstoy's "pink Christianity." Not love, but fear of God was the foundation of religion to Leontiev, who himself lived in dread of eternal damnation. To escape this dread he became a monk, and

<sup>2</sup> This is an attempt to translate the Russian term *sobornost*, derived from *sobor*, which means "council." In Khomiakov's opinion, the "conciliar" spirit distinguished the Orthodox church both from Roman Catholicism with its authoritarian organization and from Protestantism with its extremes of individualism — Ed.

entrusted his salvation to the church, not in Khomiakov's, but in the ordinary sense of the word. Instead of freedom in spirit, he preached absolute subordination to the church hierarchy, and as opposed to the illusion of love and brotherhood's ultimate victory on earth, he quoted the Apocalypse, which predicted the weakening of love precisely at the time when "the Gospel would be preached in all parts of the world." Leontiev found no call for missionary work among the Russians, and he strove to safeguard the inviolability of the Byzantine church tradition against the interference by "church people." In his conception nationality was not permeated with any strong religious spirit, and all he desired was to preserve it intact in its original state. Leontiev's views corresponded with the trend of the official church in the days of Pobedonostsev, and so he became the herald of the most consistent reactionary policy.

The revival of the idea of Orthodoxy's universal importance and the firm belief in the future destiny of the Russian people fell to the lot of Vladimir Soloviev (1853-1900), in direct opposition to Danilevsky (1822-85) and Leontiev, the two nationalistic exponents of Slavophilism. In his youth this brilliant thinker studied natural sciences and had been influenced by Comte and Spencer. Turning from unbelief to religion, he displayed greater freedom in treating religious problems than the first Slavophiles ever possessed. Before attempting to study the Fathers of the Church and the medieval mystics, he became a close student of Kant's school of philosophical criticism. He admitted that Schopenhauer and Hartman, too, had greatly influenced him, and recognized that his task lay in achieving a higher synthesis of science, philosophy, and religion. In this attempted synthesis, however, religion prevailed and he frankly declared that his aim was to "restore the faith of the fathers." As Soloviev lived and worked during a period when religious inquiries were not in vogue, he had to pave the way for his religious conception by criticizing adverse views in science and philosophy. In his initial work he analyzed the scientific conception of the world in so far as it was expressed in positivism and empiricism. From this he passed to criticism of modern philosophy which, in his belief, exhausted itself in the "abstract principles" of Hegel and his successors in contrast with the vitality and integrity of the Christian doctrine. In Soloviev's opinion both science and philosophy would

have led inevitably to scepticism and pure illusionism, for to concede the reality of the external world it was necessary to admit the existence of an absolute and all-embracing principle. Only towards the end of his active life did Soloviev abandon criticism and apply himself to the unfolding of the positive principles of his Christian doctrine, the "justification of the trinity of the Good, the Beautiful, and the True" He did not succeed in finishing this work, but in the part he wrote he presented more clearly than Khomiakov the specific traits of the Russian lay theologians: (1) the tendency to "conciliarity" coupled with the conception of Russia's "universal mission," which in Soloviev's personal case was expressed by conversion to Catholicism; (2) the desire to explain "concretely" everything that was unintelligible in religion in terms of the "inner experience," i. e., mystically; (3) the wish to unite the divine and the abstract with human life, which for Soloviev meant seeking for a mediation between God and the world, a middle course between dualism and pantheism, the transcendental and the immanent, resulting in the development of his theory of "God-Man and Divine Humanity."

Soloviev lived and died in solitude, but during the final years of his life there had appeared a number of neo-romantic writers, who protested against the positivist and empiricist tendencies of the preceding generation. In its first stage the neo-romantic protest against positivism assumed the shape of "idealism," which was understood both as a philosophical system and a vindication of ethical and esthetic norms, which, the restorers thought, had been displaced by the previous generation. The young preachers expressed their views through the newly established philosophical and psychological societies, the universities, and the periodical press. In 1902 the group published a kind of manifesto in the form of a symposium entitled *The Problems of Idealism*. Here, encouraged by the example of Soloviev, the neo-romanticists began their transition from idealistic philosophy to religion. From this group came the followers of Soloviev, the most outstanding being the two brothers, the Princes Serge and Eugene Trubetskoy, both his personal friends. The fact that their connection with the church was much stronger than that of Soloviev largely explains the changes they introduced in his doctrine with the apparent intention of bringing it closer to the Ortho-

dox tradition. But they were even less successful than Soloviev in working out an integral system of religious philosophy.

The approach of revolutionary events was diverting the attention of the wider circles of the intelligentsia from religious problems, and under the same influence various tendencies began to develop among those of the intellectuals who still remained religiously minded. A small group acquired a definitely conservative political aspect, while another group came nearer to joining the political struggle and so assumed a more daring attitude in the field of religious and philosophic theories. This trend found its most vivid expression in St. Petersburg, where upon the initiative of the Merezhkovskys there was established in 1902 a Religious Philosophical Society, which during the next two years attracted the attention of the intellectuals. Both these trends had their predecessors in the nineteenth century. The two great Russian writers, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, were self-taught in theology, and therefore could scarcely be considered as belonging to the Russian school of lay theologians, but both helped materially in reviving and spreading an interest in religion among the intellectuals and the general public. The influence of Dostoevsky, who had shown a leaning towards the traditional church, was felt principally after his death, while that of Tolstoy, who had strayed far from Orthodoxy and so incurred his excommunication by the Holy Synod, had been widespread during his lifetime. It was not limited to the strict followers of Tolstoism, but reached also Russian Sectarrians and those circles outside of Russia which were attracted by his democratic and rationalistic ethics. In time this influence was forced to subside, primarily because Tolstoy's doctrine was too individual and then because in its premises—the negation of the divine nature of Christ, the immortality of the soul, the sacraments, and the church—it overstepped the limits of what was acceptable to the Seekers after God, whose theory remained true to revealed religion. In a religious sense it was inadequate, while from the point of view of philosophical rationalism it contained too much religion.

As to the conservative trend of Russian theology in the twentieth century, it became identified with the Orthodox doctrine of the church and thus lost its lay character. P. Florensky and S. Bulgakov, its two most outstanding representatives, both became priests.

Father Florensky's writings on the "Orthodox theodicy" were based on an extensive and serious study of the works of the Holy Fathers and on general philosophical literature as well. His principal work, *The Pillar and Confirmation of Truth*, exercised a strong influence upon the subsequent development of this trend of thought in Russia. It is doubtful whether one can use the word "thought" here in its proper sense, as "Truth," which forms the subject of the book, is transposed by the author from the domain of knowledge into that of mysticism. Reason is not capable of accepting the conceptions that are indispensable to the understanding of truth. It can only reach its own "ideal limit" and then accept as a "regulative principle" the possibility of a "transcendental structure, belonging to the world beyond." Florensky expressed his attitude towards the inscrutable and unattainable in a formula borrowed from Tertullian and Pascal. *Credo quia absurdum*=I believe, because it is absurd, "I believe despite the groans of my reason, I want to be unreasonable." Becoming confirmed in his faith and avowing that "faith is the source of supreme understanding," the Seeker after God turns to the formula of Anselm of Canterbury *Credo, ut intelligam*=I believe in order to understand. Thus, nine centuries after the days of Anselm, the author is convinced that he "not only believes, but also understands," and he calls out in rapture "*Intelligo, ut credam*=I understand in order to believe."

From the point of view of the official church, Florensky's book reached the extreme limit of the admissible, and it was only after much deliberation that it was accepted by the ecclesiastical authorities as an academic thesis. It outlined the potentialities of Orthodox theology and in this sense became a guide for other theologians of the same trend. His successor, the Rev. Sergius Bulgakov, far less emotional by nature, does not permit himself that degree of freedom which we find in Florensky. With him theology is further divested of philosophical theories, and that which Florensky left unexplained he expounds in a spirit of submission to the church tradition.

This compromise with official theology did not satisfy N. Berdiaev, formerly an ardent Nietzschean, for he found that "there was no answer in the catechism and teachings of the Elders to the sufferings and questionings of Nietzsche. . . . The human soul

underwent a change, and those who had known the definite spiritual freedom and in that freedom had returned to the Christian faith, never could eradicate or efface from their hearts that experience." These people "carry with them into Christianity a special spirit of freedom." The Christian conscience of our day cannot say that since the time of Ecumenical Councils and the disputes among the teachers of the church nothing has changed, for "human nature has changed radically, and today man is suffering from new sins. . . . Mankind has known Hamlet and Faust, Nietzsche and Dostoevsky, has experienced humanism, romanticism, the revolutionary spirit, and the science of modern times, and these experiences cannot be obliterated." "At present the creative genius must be applied to continuing the work begun by the ancient teachers of the church, and not to repeating their answers to old problems." And Berdiaev proudly calls his theology "the philosophy of the liberated spirit."

We shall complete this outline with statistical data, which show to what extent in modern history the religious needs of the Russian people were satisfied by the church. The table that follows demonstrates the number of churches, monasteries, monastic and secular clergy in 1738, 1840, and 1890 respectively.

	<i>Actual figures</i>			<i>As per 100,000 inhabitants of Orthodox faith</i>		
	1738	1840	1890	1738	1840	1890
Churches	16,901	31,333	40,205	106	71	56
Secular clergy	124,923	116,728	96,892	781	265	137
Monasteries						
and convents	948	547	724	6	12	1
Monks, nuns,						
and novices	14,282	15,251	40,286	89	56	34

The chief interest is not in the actual figures, which attest the increase in churches and those leading the monastic life, with a corresponding decline of the secular clergy, but in the relation of these figures to the mass of the population. The increase in the actual figures can be explained by the natural growth of the Russian Orthodox population, although this growth was far more rapid than the increase of the figures. In 1738 there were in Russia not

more than sixteen million Orthodox people, in 1840 they amounted to forty-four million, and in 1890 to seventy-two million. In comparison to these figures the number of religious institutions and clergy shows a continuous and rapid decline. So at the end of the nineteenth century for every Orthodox inhabitant of the Empire there were half the number of churches, two and a half times fewer monks, almost six times fewer secular clergy and monasteries than a century and a half previously. The decline in the number of secular clergy was due to the rigorous "sorting" and the law of 1869. Unfortunately there are no figures relating to earlier days.

Equally interesting are the figures which characterize the assimilative power of the church. During the fifty years preceding the revolution official documents registered over a million, or to be exact 1,172,000 conversions. Half of these, i. e., 580,000, were Catholics, Protestants, and Greek Uniates. But Preobrazhensky considers that of the last figure only 110,000 (75,000 Catholics and 35,000 Protestants) could be regarded as an "obvious result of missionary preaching, the fruits of labor and the efforts of the shepherds of the church and other zealots of Orthodoxy." The conversion of the remaining 470,000 he rightly ascribes to national and political causes rather than religious ones. So in the forties of the nineteenth century over 100,000 Letts and Esthonians were converted from Protestantism, and an equal number of Catholics after the suppression of the Polish revolt in 1863, while 250,000 Uniates were added to these in 1895 (1,674,478 of Uniates had been already converted in 1836-39). The second category consisted of those converted from Old Ritualism. According to official figures, there were 311,279 conversions, out of which only 195,926 could be considered as absolute. The average annual number of conversions in this category was 18,000 during the thirties, 10,800 in the forties, 9,000 in the fifties, 2,800 during the sixties and seventies, and 5,500 in the eighties of the nineteenth century. As pointed out by Preobrazhensky, the distribution of figures by decades shows clearly that the missionary success depended entirely on the degree of strictness exerted towards the Schism by the government, in other words, those who joined Orthodoxy were not, even in that case, impelled solely by religious considerations. Unfortunately there is no possibility of tracing the defection of the Orthodox to the Schism or



Sectarianism, and we possess no reliable data on the conversion of the Sectarians to Orthodoxy. The Russian "inner mission" found itself in a difficult and ambiguous position, in which it was placed by the general course of Russian religious history. Neither the state nor the church had foreseen that it was possible to choose a religion according to one's personal conviction. Faith was regarded as something innate, inseparable from nationality, a second nature, so to speak. Consequently, up to the revolution, freedom of conscience and religious toleration were understood as the right of other nationalities within the Empire to profess their own creed. Not so long ago the Russian missionaries insisted that Baptism be regarded as a "German faith" and refused to recognize as Baptists the Russians who supported this doctrine. A native Orthodox Russian, notwithstanding his religious convictions, could not legally cease to be Orthodox. The existence of the Schism could not be denied, but the official tendency of the law was to ignore every new case of "perversion" and to accept as Schismatics only those who were born in the Schism. The law recognized only the defection to "particularly pernicious" sects, while in other cases the "perverted" one was subject only to being restored to the bosom of the church, and in his stead the authorities punished his "perverter." In these circumstances it was natural for those leaving the church to conceal the fact of their defection, and especially its exact time. A direct result of this abnormal condition was a distortion of the aim of the "inner mission," a situation which was deplored by the missionaries themselves, for it changed the duties of the clergy from religious ones to those of inquisition and police.

The natural outcome of compulsory or self-interested conversion to Orthodoxy was a marked decline in the inner life of the Orthodox. In 1859 the ecclesiastical authorities investigated the religious life among the 51,474,200 Orthodox in Russia, and found that only 35,087,097 of them partook of the Holy Communion or went to confession. "From mere neglect" 3,417,231 adults and 9,232,234 children never observed the rites. Some 819,951 of them made excuses, which were accepted as satisfactory, but 726,982 avoided confession "because of their tendency towards the Schism, and in this category perhaps should be included the 2,196,714 who went to confession but did not partake of the Holy Communion. So we have three

million dissimulating Schismatics to whom should be added a certain percentage of other categories, and we must bear in mind that the members of the "particularly pernicious" sects, like the Khlysty, also observed all church rituals most zealously.

It remains for us to examine the third sphere of missionary activity in the Russian church—the conversion of non-Christians and pagans. In this field, where the church could have performed work of great spiritual importance, the results were even more disappointing. For a period of fifty years the average number of non-Christians joining Orthodoxy was 2,251 annually and that of pagans 3,104. In pointing out the insignificance of the last figure as compared to the abundant results of missionary work in the principal Western countries, Preobrazhensky explained it by the lack of financial means at the disposal of Russian missions. While undoubtedly true, this fact does not explain the situation. Why were these means so scanty and why was public opinion so indifferent to their being increased? Why were the available means distributed so unequally among the various spheres of church activity, and why was it that the performance of duties imposed upon it by the state took precedence over the purely religious and cultural function? Why was the missionary body so deficient in outstanding workers? The explanation lies in the general character of the pre-revolutionary church in Russia, the natural result of which was the failure of its missionary work.

## VIII

# THE CHURCH DURING THE REVOLUTION

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THE revolution took the Russian church unawares. This, of course, was quite natural in view of its previous history. The immobility of its dogma, the prevalence of administrative activities over the spiritual, the ritualism of the masses and their indifference towards the spiritual contents of religion, placed the Russian church in a totally different relation to revolutionary ideas from that which existed in seventeenth-century England, where the revolution of religious ideas preceded and was closely connected with the political revolution.

Moreover, traditionally the Russian church had been a tool of the state and was made to follow a definite policy, which in itself rendered the church a natural and inevitable opponent of the revolution. With the passive attitude of society and the masses towards church affairs, the part played by the church was never questioned and was accepted as a fact. But by degrees, as Russia entered the revolutionary period of her history, and the state increased its efforts to suppress the opposition, the conservative rôle of the church became more and more apparent. Immediately before the revolution, during the most intense moment of the struggle, the state applied to the church, seeking its spiritual support and justification as a substantiation of its own material force. Thus, to its misfortune, the Russian church entered the revolutionary field in a militant rôle.

The monastic clergy and, through them, the secular priests, were under the complete control of the Chief Procurator of the Synod.

In the days of Pobedonostsev and Sabler the influence of the state and its conservative ideology penetrated the church to its core and paralyzed all manifestations of a free religious life. The church was made to educate the masses at the parish schools in the spirit of official Orthodoxy, and its supreme organ was composed of those willing to serve the government and ready to comply with the demands of the Chief Procurator. With the establishment of the Duma and the formation of political parties, the church was officially assigned to the service of the Union of the Russian People and the Nationalists, i. e., the parties that were leading the fight for the restoration of autocracy. During the elections to the Third Duma, the clergy fulfilled their political duty by sending to the Duma about fifty "cassocked" deputies, who supported the bills restricting toleration and the freedom of teaching in the theological schools, which had been introduced by the ecclesiastical authorities. Even the moderate majority of the Duma was so provoked by this policy that it voted down the budget estimates presented by the Holy Synod. In 1912, at the elections to the Fourth Duma, the Synod and the Ministry for Home Affairs had created from the clergy such a powerful electoral machine that it threatened the Duma with an ecclesiastical invasion (about one hundred fifty deputies). The government was forced to retreat and to limit the clerical deputies to their original number of fifty. Finally, in its last pre-revolutionary stage the church descended to the level of Rasputinism.

Within the church, however, attempts were made to meet the spirit of the times and, while remaining strictly on Orthodox ground, to introduce liberal amendments into the established ecclesiastical order. At this period there appeared in the theological academies a spirit of liberalism, which the Synod in 1908 applied rigorous measures to suppress. During the first revolution of 1905 there was formed among the professors of the theological academies a group of thirty-two in support of the "renovation" of the church. Their aspirations were extremely modest, but their activities nevertheless provoked an antagonistic campaign in the press and a persecution by the authorities. As a result the movement subsided, but only temporarily, for it appeared again under a different aspect in the First and the Second Dumas among the rural clergy who, to

the astonishment of those in power, joined the parties "more radical than the Constitutional Democrats" and strove to protect the interests of the masses. These "sympathizers with the people" suffered for their weakness, but the temper which existed among the democratic members of the clergy could not be extirpated.

Such was the situation at the time of the February Revolution. The Provisional Government showed great caution in handling church problems and decided to postpone radical reforms until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. It could not, however, avoid the establishment of some general rules, along the lines indicated in the decree of April 17, 1905, which dealt with freedom of conscience and religious toleration. Not until June 1917 did the Provisional Government abolish the office of the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod and institute in its stead a Ministry of Religion, with a special Department for the Heterodox. Although this beginning was very modest, the general spirit in which the unavoidable religious reform had to be approached was clearly defined. Even before the revolution the opposition in the Duma supported the idea of separation of church and state, the separation of schools from the church, and absolute freedom of conscience, including the legal recognition of an extra-denominational status, totally unknown to the old confessional state. The law passed on July 17, 1917, recognized religious freedom, but the clergy retained the right to register births and sanction marriages. Another law on July 20, 1917, transferred the parish schools to the Ministry for Public Education, a measure which met with the approval of even the parish school teachers.

Moderate as they were, these measures did not fail to incite the representatives of the church against the "godless" Provisional Government and consequently caused an open conflict. In June 1917, a convention of some 1,200 clergy and laymen assembled in Moscow, and formulated a program, which was subsequently developed at length in the decisions of the Pre-Council Committee of July 13, 1917. The Orthodox church claimed for itself precedence over all other religions, complete independence from the state and the recognition of all church acts not in conflict with the law; the preservation of its legal rights in connection with marriage and divorce; the acknowledgment of church holidays by the state; the

participation by the church in state ceremonies; the right to open primary, secondary, and higher schools for professional as well as general education, enjoying state privileges; the compulsory teaching of religion in secular schools; the recognition of legal rights for church institutions; and, finally, the maintenance of the church and its schools to be provided for by the state budget. The realization of this program would mean not only the preservation, but considerable expansion of the church's old privileges. Naturally the Provisional Government could not consent to these demands, so the church spokesmen referred to it as "anti-Christian." It was in this state of mind that the elections to the Local Church Council took place, its convocation having been announced by the Holy Synod in a proclamation on April 29, 1917.

The convocation of the Council realized an old desire of both progressive and conservative members of the church. Among the concessions granted by Emperor Nicholas II in 1905 was also the promise of this convocation, and a preliminary session of the Pre-Council Committee began its work in January 1906, continuing throughout the year. As the liberals were in the minority, the program worked out by the Committee was a strictly conservative one. With the dissolution of the First Duma the session of the Committee also came to an end. The promise to convoke the Council for the celebration of the tercentenary of the House of Romanov in 1913 was not fulfilled. It was brought into effect by the first revolutionary government. The Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod in the Provisional Government, Vladimir Lvov, a former member of the Duma, profiting by his power, dismissed the old reactionary members of the Synod and replaced them with others, who were considered more or less liberal. In the proclamation of April 29, 1917, the Holy Synod, in referring to "the widespread revival of the church, inspired by liberal principles," stated that "with the change of régime the established church could not preserve the old order which had outlived its time." Another announcement, on July 5, concerning the Council, also mentioned the renovation of the church and the intention to attract to the Council all its "living forces." Professors with liberal tendencies were invited to join the Pre-Council Committee. On August 12, 1917, the Committee presented a memorandum to the Synod in which it spoke of "reforms

in the organization and life of the church, in accordance with the pressing needs of the hour" and the "replacing of antiquated norms by new ones corresponding to modern standards."

Of the 564 delegates elected to the Council from 66 dioceses (including 278 laymen) the majority was more conservative than the new Synod which had convoked the Council. To oppose the "dangerous" tendencies of the liberals, this majority formed a solid body under the leadership of Bishop Theodore, while the progressive professors and priests formed a separate group. In fact, the decisions of the Council could become valid only after their approval by the Council of Bishops.

From the very opening of the Council, on August 15, 1917, a political note was sounded simultaneously with the expression of hope for the "growth of religious faith among the people" and "a complete renovation of the church life." "The Council is expected to assist in the organization of the state," said Metropolitan Tikhon of Moscow, referring in this connection to requests made by General Kornilov and his officers in the name of the army. Shein, the secretary of the Council, proposed to appeal to the people of Russia "to refrain from enmity and strife," while other members suggested that they "support the upright and expose the wicked." The Council in a message actually designated September 14 as a day "of national repentance and general prayers for the salvation of the Russian state." Here was expressed the thought which afterwards dominated the minds of people belonging to certain political groups. that the true cause of Russia's misfortunes lay in "our spiritual depravity" and that the nation was "led astray" by "anti-Christian teachings." A group consisting of fifty-two members of the Council supported the idea that the representatives of the church should take an active part in the elections to the Constituent Assembly and advise the people "not to vote on a list of men unknown to them, but only on the one approved by the Diocesan Council."

The long-awaited proposal made by Bishop Anthony Khrapovitsky, the leader of the conservatives, for the reestablishment of the Patriarchate was also tinged with politics. This motion was passed by the Committee of the Council by fifty-six votes against a strong minority of thirty-two, and occasioned vehement debates in the

plenary session of the Council. The proponents of the scheme for the reestablishment of the Patriarchate emphasized the fact that "the state desired to be non-confessional, openly severing its alliance with the church," and consequently the church "must become militant and have its own spiritual leader." "We are entering a period of persecutions," declared Prince E. N. Trubetskoy, while the Council reached the same conclusion after a deputation, which protested against the secularization of parish schools, had an unsuccessful interview with Kerensky. Somehow the thought of a Patriarch became associated with that of a Tsar, while those opposed to the reestablishment of the Patriarchate brought forward democratic and republican arguments.

The problem was solved by the upheaval of October 25, 1917, when, frightened by the Bolshevik victory and anticipating a forcible end to its work, the Council, desirous to leave behind it "a strong power able to resist and influence the state authority," expedited its activities. The endless debates ceased, and on October 30, to the accompaniment of shots fired in the streets, the Council with an incomplete quorum passed the resolution on the reestablishment of the Patriarchate by 141 votes to 112, twelve abstaining from voting. The majority constituted exactly a fourth of the entire body. Yet on November 4 it was declared that supreme authority over the church was not invested in the Patriarch, but rested with the Council, periodically convoked; that the Patriarch was only *primus inter pares* and, like the administrative organs, was responsible to the Council.

Following the precedent of 1634, it was decided to draw lots for the three nominated candidates. At the nomination Anthony Khrapovitsky, an energetic leader of the conservatives, obtained the majority, while Tikhon had the smallest vote, but on November 5, at the solemn gathering in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, the nonagenarian anchorite Alexis drew Tikhon's name. On November 21, 1917, the "enthronement" of the Patriarch took place at the Cathedral of the Assumption, and on November 26 there was a solemn procession with cross and banners in the Red Square. According to the statements of both his friends and enemies, the eleventh Patriarch of the Russian church was gentle and yielded easily to outside influences. His enemies added that



he was uneducated and lacking in will power, while his friends emphasized his outstanding sense of duty and the consciousness of the importance of his position. The fact is that Tikhon's actions were restrained by two institutions: the Holy Synod and the Supreme Administration of the church, the latter comprising the lower clergy and some laymen, such as Kartashev, Bulgakov, and the Princes Trubetskoy. After the members of these institutions were elected, the first session of the Council came to an end.

The recess lasted from December 10, 1917, to January 20, 1918. The members returned home in a different mood from that in which they arrived. In referring to it on November 21, 1917, at the house of the Patriarch, Anthony Khrapovitsky said:

With a feeling of unrest and somewhat dejected in spirit the church members arrived here in August. . . . At the summit and in the heart of church life voices foreign and frequently quite hostile to the spirit of the church were audible . . . but even at the first sitting the religious spirit, requiring obedience to the rules of the church, predominated. . . . The council with increasing unanimity, daring, and directness began to avow its resolution against modifying and distorting the Christian faith

The left wing described the same events quite differently. On October 2, 1917, after a sharp conflict, Prof. B. V. Titlinov resigned from the Council and, having been dismissed as the editor of the *Church and Social Herald*, wrote in the last issue that appeared under his editorship: "We are entering the period of reaction . . . which is already gaining ground in church life. . . . Nevertheless, a free church of a free people will find a new tribune for the expression of its ideas."

In the interval between the two sessions of the Council, civil war started on the Don and some of those who had determined the policy of the Council joined the anti-Bolshevik side. Under such conditions it was not surprising that between the White Army of the South and the high representatives of the church there was established a mutual understanding and a bond which was not strictly confined to the spiritual. The church now became a leader in the ranks of spiritual fighters against the Bolshevik régime, and on it were placed the greatest hopes. Later (June 15,

1923), in his declaration to the Bolsheviks, the Patriarch confessed that "having been brought up in a monarchical society," he was "under the influence of anti-Soviet people," who continually encouraged him "as the head of the Orthodox church to act against the Soviet government."

It is true that the Bolsheviks, by their activities in regard to the internal life of the church, supplied valid excuses for such an attitude. In December 1917 they proceeded determinedly and sternly to eliminate the very essence of the old confessional state. On December 4, land owned by the churches and monasteries, together with other land in the country, was nationalized, while on the eleventh of the same month a new decree, far more drastic than that of the Provisional Government, transferred the control of the parish schools, seminaries, and theological academies to the Commissariat for the People's Education. On December 18 the church was deprived of its right to register births and marriages, and on the twentieth it was proclaimed that only civil marriages possessed legal force. The decree of January 20, 1918, abolished all financial support by the state to church institutions, and continued the salaries of the priests for only a month.

All of this was in direct opposition to the demands of the church as formulated by the Council on December 2, 1917. So on January 19, 1918, on the eve of the opening of the new session of the Council, the Patriarch delivered a threatening message in which he sternly attacked the "satanic work" of "the monsters of the human race," "for which they should be condemned to the eternal fire of Gehenna." He anathematized those of the Bolsheviks who "still bore a Christian name" and invoked the faithful children of the church not to have any intercourse with them. The Patriarch enumerated the decrees of the Soviet government as manifestations of "unruly self-will and acts of violence against the holy church"; he summoned all the faithful "to resist them by means of an overwhelming national protest, which . . . would prove to them that they were not entitled to call themselves advocates of the people's welfare or builders of a new life in accordance with the popular will." Tikhon called upon the clergy to "found spiritual unions" and to organize "the ranks of spiritual

fighters to defend the trampled rights of the church by the force of their sacred inspiration."

The Council assembled on January 20, 1918, and subscribed whole-heartedly to the Patriarch's protest. "At last," said Count D. A. Olsufiev, "we hear the voice of a living conscience instead of reading an official document," while Prince E. N. Trubetskoy added: "The days of unworthy compromise are over. We must act energetically . . . and arouse the entire Orthodox people in defense of the church." However, some doubts were also voiced. Was it possible to refuse to deal with the authorities when "life brought one in contact with the transgressors?" To what extent should the estates of the church and its sacred relics be actively defended? Was it possible to rely upon the people? "We must not overestimate the influence of the Patriarch's message on the working class. Bolshevism is not dead, it still retains a strong hold over the masses," warned D. I. Bogolubov. Dean Stanislavsky, another member of the Council, testified that in the provinces the soldiers had threatened to destroy all priests as "enemies of the people," and as they have torn up previous appeals of the church so "neither will this one achieve its end." The question also arose how the priests were to act when threatened with death—should they remain in their parishes or should they leave? The general conclusion was that after the publication of the Patriarch's message, the Council faced the path of "Christian martyrdom" and that the only remedy against the contagion of Bolshevism was in appealing to the people "to do penance for their sins from the ambo," and in closing the churches in places where "no true repentance was to be found." In order to impress the Moscow population directly, it was decided to organize, on January 28, religious processions from all the churches to the Red Square, following the example of the procession held in Petersburg on January 21, which had attracted several hundred thousand devotees who successfully protected the Alexander Nevsky Abbey from sequestration. The religious demonstration at Moscow was also extremely successful. "Never before or since have I seen such a solid mass of people," testified one of the eyewitnesses.

As yet the Bolsheviks were unable to deal with the situation in

a radical way, and their reaction to it was the issuance of a decree on January 23, 1918, on "the freedom of conscience and the religious societies," which has subsequently been called "the separation of the church from the state and of schools from the church." The decree reduced to a system the principles which on July 6, 1918, were incorporated in Article Thirteen of the Soviet Constitution. In later years further additions were made to church legislation, but up to 1928 the fundamental principles remained unchanged in the Russian Soviet Republic as well as in the other Soviet Republics. This period of Bolshevik legislation on church matters ended with the decree of April 8, 1927, which codified all previous instructions and interpretations issued since the inception of the Soviet government in Russia. Article Thirteen of the Constitution of the Russian Soviet Republic adopted on July 6, 1918, reads as follows: "In order to secure for the toiling masses a real freedom of conscience, the church is being separated from the state, the schools from the church, and freedom of religious or anti-religious propaganda is recognized for all citizens." However, in putting this principle into practice the Bolsheviks went far beyond the meaning attached to these terms in the legislation of other countries, where the same principles had been adopted. Although in principle the decree on the separation of the church from the state was applied to all creeds alike, nevertheless it became clear that the chief attack was directed at the established church, for in no circumstances did they wish to deal with the representatives of the Orthodox hierarchy. Having transferred the entire church property to "the people and the state," they subsequently lent, for temporary use only, the articles of the cult to parishioners, or more specifically to a "group of the faithful" in each parish. This group was to comprise not less than twenty people, who would consent to draw up an agreement with the local Soviet organization by which they would have possession of the church building and other property connected with the cult, provided they maintained the church building in good repair and paid the taxes. Independently of anyone the group could procure a priest, but he had to comply with all the duties of an ordinary citizen. All other church units, while not officially abolished, were simply ignored by the new authorities, and remained a matter of

personal, private, and voluntary agreement among the faithful. The central administration of the church—synodal, diocesan, and sub-diocesan—thus was considered abolished. Moreover, the individual “groups of the faithful,” who had assumed the management of the churches, did not acquire the rights of juridical persons, and so were deprived of the possibility of concluding legal transactions, except the most ordinary ones, such as purchasing articles of the cult or leasing property. Church organizations were debarred from philanthropic, educational, and economic activities; only the individual persons, on their own responsibility and on the basis of the general law, could attend to these matters.

In addition to the “groups of the faithful,” authority was granted for forming “religious societies” with no less than fifty members. On April 11, 1924, it was explained that this form of organization was intended chiefly for the “Living Church” and the Sectarrians, whereas the Orthodox church had to be satisfied with forming “groups.” Being duly registered, the religious societies could spread their activities over several provinces and, with special permission, could form all-Russian conventions and publish periodicals, subject to governmental censorship. Unlike other private societies, however, they had no right of property and were not recognized as juridical persons (the law of August 3, 1922, and instruction of April 27, 1923).

Another characteristic feature of the new legislation was the treatment of religious teaching. The theological schools of every creed were abolished, while in the private and public schools of general education teaching of religion was prohibited under the threat of a year or more at hard labor. Only those over eighteen years of age could be instructed in religion at home or even take special theological courses in preparation for the priesthood. In replying to the many petitions for exception, the authorities explained that “the education of children rested with the Soviet government,” therefore it was its “right and duty to prevent the children’s heads from being filled with prejudices, such as the clergy were trying to instill through religious teaching.”

In Soviet Russia the separation of the church from the state did not mean that the state wanted to remain neutral towards the church. On the contrary, the Communist state openly sided with

the antagonists of religion and pledged itself to an active campaign against faith, in fulfillment of the demands of the Communist Party, with which it was completely identified. According to paragraph thirteen of the party program, "the party strives for the complete destruction of any union between the exploiting classes and religious organizations, and works towards the liberation of the laboring masses from religious prejudices by means of a widespread scientific instruction and anti-religious propaganda." The obligations of the party became those of the state. When the Swedish Communist, Hoglund, expressed his opinion that "the Communist Party should not require every member to have a Marxian conception of the world," that "Socialism in itself was not antagonistic to the Christian faith," and that to proclaim atheism as a prerequisite to the membership in the Communist Party would be like "degrading it to the level of a sect," he met with strong opposition on the part of his Russian comrades. The slogan "Religion is a private affair" was reserved for the parties of the Second International. The attitude of the Russian Communists was formulated as a substantially different one by I. Stepanov, in his pamphlet on *The Problems and Methods of Anti-Religious Propaganda*.

In our decrees, as in the Erfurt program, it was clearly stated that the church was the private affair of individual citizens. But the opportunists endow this formula with the meaning that the state should assume the policy of "folded arms" towards religion, and revolutionary Marxism considers it the state's duty to wage a most unrelenting and extensive fight against religion, by means of an ideological influence over the laboring masses. To hold debates with priests on an equal footing . . . proves an opportunist tendency towards liberalism. We give no liberty to the obscurants and we shall never acknowledge their right to dim the conscience of the masses. Debates for debates' sake is a foreign, democratic formula.

In 1923 the *Red Gazette* asked the question: "Can we stop [at the separation of the church from the state]," and replied:

No we cannot! Our aim is to fight religion! In schools, at the clubs, and in society—everywhere we are confronting mysticism and devilry with scientific materialism . . . We must introduce a political element into the struggle. To us religion and the church are connected with the

bourgeoisie; the working classes, having revolted against the bourgeoisie, must actively and energetically struggle against the implements of their enslavement.

Thus the party of the Third International declared war on religion and anti-Christian propaganda to be "not a private, but an all-party, all-proletarian task," employing the usual methods of class struggle against the bourgeoisie. These views had not been clearly defined by the time of the second session of the Orthodox Council, and even the very stability of the Bolshevik régime still seemed doubtful. But the decree on the separation of church and schools stated the question of war on religion quite pointedly. An immediate reaction to it was all-important, and considering the mood of the Council the character of this reaction could be easily anticipated.

At a sitting on January 25, 1918, Prince E. Trubetskoy in making a report on the decree described it as "an act of open persecution of the Orthodox church. . . . Those in power are threatening the very essence of the church, and have issued the decree in pursuance of this satanic design." They "are endeavoring to destroy the church, its institutions, and the clergy, with the aim of abolishing every opportunity for worship and divine service."

Something had to be done, but the Council possessed only the old methods. the "punishment of the sinners by penance or excommunication" and an "appeal to the people to rally round the churches and monasteries for the defense of the sanctuaries against the transgressors." "So God help them," said the chairman when the resolutions were passed. Unwilling to tolerate the present situation and anticipating further persecutions, the Council also promptly accepted another resolution, which empowered the Patriarch to appoint several candidates for the post of Locum Tenens, in case of his absence. These candidates were to be known only to the Patriarch and would be supplied by him with credentials, so that if necessary the power could pass automatically from one of them to another and "the church would never be without a supreme central authority, invested with the full rights of the Patriarch."

Thus the challenge was accepted and the open struggle began. A proclamation, approved by the Council, referred to "the people

who were in power and were calling themselves the People's Commissars" as being

. . . atheists, non-Russian, and non-Orthodox. . . . Even the Tatars had more respect for our holy creed than our present law-givers . . . Had what they planned been achieved, Holy Orthodox Russia would have become the land of Antichrist . . . It is better to shed one's blood and win a martyr's crown, than to abandon the Orthodox faith to be abused by the enemy. Take heart, Holy Russia. Go to thy Calvary!

On February 28 the Patriarch and the Synod issued another proclamation in which they invited the laity to organize parish unions, which, however, should not be called church or religious unions. In case of emergency these unions could declare themselves owners of church property. The teachers at church schools "must form a close union with the parents of the pupils and endeavor to uphold unchanged the order of the establishment, until special regulations are issued by the church authorities." It was recommended that the sacred vessels be hidden from the "robbers," "not handed over voluntarily," but preserved with the rest of the church property. In case of "assault," "call the church people by tocsin, messengers, etc., to protect the church." In a word, the proclamation ignored the decree on the separation of church and schools, and called for a revolutionary method of action.

Following this proclamation, there were numerous church demonstrations and instances of open resistance which led to arrests and other reprisals. In Samara the clergy were summoned before a revolutionary tribunal; in Voronezh the crowd attacked a commissar, who had been sent to a local monastery, and slew him; religious processions were shot at in both Orel and Kharkov, while in Tula eleven people were killed, and in the district of Peshekhonie about one hundred arrests were made and some of those arrested were shot. At an earlier date Metropolitan Vladimir was murdered in Kiev.

On April 20, towards the end of its session, the Council adopted the "statutes on Orthodox parishes," which also disregarded the Soviet decree, and which subsequently served as a basis for the organization of the open struggle against the enemies of the church. Two days previously, in view of numerous casualties, it



was resolved to introduce a special prayer into the service "for the persecuted faithful and the martyrs"; and on January 25 of each year to celebrate mass in commemoration of "all those who perished during that fateful year"; to have religious processions visit their graves; to send special messages from the Patriarch to "those suffering for the sacred cause," and the blessing of the Holy Council for all the "upholders of the Faith." Moreover, on April 19 "those who either disobeyed or opposed the church authority and appealed to civil power" were condemned as apostates, and threatened with interdiction, unfrocking, and excommunication.

The directions of the Council were carried out, and the new parish unions intended for organizing resistance were formed speedily. On April 13 the *Petrograd Messenger* openly called for the establishment of parish cooperative stores, schools, and even parish tribunals. According to church antagonists, "the general opinion was that the Bolsheviks would break their neck on the church." The measures taken by the Council actually proved that its members had no conception of the hold which the Bolsheviks would shortly have on the church.

Because of the sudden break of the Bolsheviks with tradition, the leaders of the church counted on an upheaval of religiousness in the masses, and to a certain extent these expectations were justified. The following is a testimony written by A. Vvedensky, an opponent of the Patriarchal church

Religiousness is increasing in the life of the church, the newly converted masses flood the houses of the Lord, and sometimes there flares up a genuine religious spirit. The anxiety for moral improvement and the regeneration of the soul is evident . . . The new church intellectuals are at work organizing church power . . . they penetrate into the parish committees, which at present are the basic points for promoting the Tikhonian policy . . . It appears as if the church were completely absorbed in the fulfillment of its direct, purely religious task. Many truly religious people might have (and I myself really had) the illusion that by the powerful sway of events the church had been forced to follow this only course. Undoubtedly alongside the deeply hidden current of counter-revolution, in 1919 and 1920 there was within the church the rustle of spring waters of genuine piety.

This admission is the more valuable, as it comes from a partisan fighter to whom the struggle for the preservation of church tradition means "counter-revolution" and who considers it very different from "genuine piety." In reality both trends merged into one, which the Rev. A. Vvedensky himself soon had to realize.

The third session of the Council took place "under the sword of Damocles." The Soviet press repeated over and over again that "the Council was the home of anti-revolutionary activities." The uprising of the Social Revolutionaries of the left, the attempts on the lives of Volodarsky, Uritsky, and Lenin led to the strengthening of reprisals against the counter-revolution on the part of the government. In the meantime there were more victims to the cause of the church, victims of the red terror: Bishops Andronik, Hermogenes, Ephraim, Rev. Kudriavtsev, and several laymen. But while the body of the church was "being buried deep in the earth," its head, the Patriarch, maintained his stand of irreconcilability. On October 26, 1918, he addressed another message to the Council of People's Commissars, still more passionate than the previous ones, in which the political element prevailed over the religious one, and which undoubtedly was not of his own composition. "All those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword," such was the text chosen for the message. Summing up the achievements of Bolshevism on its first anniversary, the Patriarch spoke of the "shameful peace" with Germany, the terms of which the Bolsheviks "dared not publish at full length," and of the mother country

. . . conquered, disparaged, and dismembered by them. . . . You have replaced the fatherland with the soulless International and driven the people to fratricide unprecedented in its cruelty. . . . No one feels safe . . . the defenseless are seized by hundreds, kept festering for months in prison, and often put to death without investigation or trial . . . Bishops, priests, and monks, though entirely innocent, without discrimination, are executed under some vague charge of counter-revolution. You have incited the people to most shameful depredations . . . you have shrouded their conscience. . . . Particularly painful and cruel is the interference with the freedom of religion. . . . You have scoffed at the servants of the altar, forced the bishops to dig trenches [Hermogenes] and sent the priests to do foul work. You have laid hold

of church property accumulated by generations of the faithful . . . you have destroyed the original form of church community—the parish . . . dispersed diocesan assemblies, interfered with the internal administration of the church, deprived the children of spiritual food indispensable to an Orthodox education . . . I shall not speak of the downfall of the once great and mighty Russia. . . . We know that our accusations only provoke your wrath and supply grounds for incriminating us with antagonism towards the authority; but the higher the pillar of your wrath rises, the more will it confirm the justice of our accusations.

Why did not the Soviet government at once accept this challenge? This can be explained in part by its inability to cope with the religious feelings within its own ranks, which had forced it to act cautiously. The Central Committee of the Communist Party, in a special circular of March 19, 1921, accused some party members of strengthening the religious prejudices by publicly performing the most absurd religious rituals, having no power to resist the demands of the backward masses to whom they were connected by economic and family ties, instead of waging the anti-religious war prescribed by paragraph thirteen of the program. A great sensation was produced by the Committee of the Communist Party in Kaluga, which reprimanded one of its members for playing the accordion at his home during the celebration of the midnight church service on Easter. According to a report, made in September 1921 to the Central Committee, "the question began to acquire an acute character with the numerical growth of the party and the admission into it of the backward element from the working class and the declassed petty bourgeois of the cities." In view of this situation, the Central Committee dared not take drastic measures, and only prohibited admission to the party of any clergymen and those of the "intellectuals" who did not subscribe entirely to paragraph thirteen. The observance of church rituals was still permitted to the peasants and workmen, and it was generally decided "not to project this question" and to put a damper on anti-religious disputes, so as not to give cause to "our enemies to say that we are persecuting the people for their faith."

Two facts transformed this cautious mood into an openly aggressive one. the appearance of a trend within the Orthodox church,

which met the Bolsheviks halfway, and the famine of 1921-22, which provided a convenient pretext for the confiscation of church valuables. Both put an end to the period of uncertainty in the relations between the government and the church. Instead of the sporadic struggle, restrained by the decrees on the freedom of conscience, there followed systematic persecutions, which while assuming various forms, always pursued one object—the abolishment of religion.

The first phase of this aggressive policy, which still showed the comparative weakness of the Soviet government, was an attempt to oppose the established church by other religious trends of a more progressive nature, willing to come to an agreement with the authorities.

During the very first days of the February Revolution (March 7, 1917) some priests from the group of "Thirty-two" (see page 152), deacons, and laymen organized an All-Russian Union of Democratic Orthodox Clergy and Laymen, under the chairmanship of the Rev. D. Popov, with Dean A. Vvedensky as secretary. The Union expressed itself in favor of a republican government in Russia and accepted the principle of a struggle against capitalism. Of course such a radical program could not unite all the progressive clergy. It had no success in Moscow, and at the Pre-Council Convention its proposals were voted down. But in St. Petersburg it took possession of *The Church and Social Messenger*, and one of its members, Prof. Titlinov, was elected to the Church Council, where he remained until a sharp conflict with the majority of the Council forced him to resign. When the conservative tendency of the majority of the Council became obvious, the Union began to lean towards the decision "to manage the church affairs independent of the ruling hierarchy." The group was averse to the reestablishment of the Patriarchate, and when Tikhon was elected the oppositionists resolved, at the instigation of Archpriest G. Shavel'sky, "to break with the official church in Moscow." "In accordance with the plan," said Vvedensky, "the separation from Tikhon should have taken effect simultaneously in Petrograd, Kiev, and Odessa." But in Moscow it was considered that "the time was not yet ripe, and our proposal did not meet with general approval."

The time for the triumph of the opposition arrived later, when

the church majority came into open conflict with the Soviet government, and was declared by the latter to be guilty of counter-revolution. By the end of 1921 a pretext was found to accuse the church leaders of direct contact with the émigrés. From November 21 to December 3, a convention of bishops, priests, and laymen, who had emigrated from Russia—"The Convention of the Russian Church outside of Russia"—was held in Sremski Karlovtsy (Yugoslavia), under the chairmanship of Anthony Khrapovitsky, formerly the first candidate for the patriarchal see, whose political convictions are characterized by the fact that before the revolution he had been a member of the reactionary Union of the Russian People. In addition to the religious task, consisting in the election of an independent Synod of Bishops, acting in the capacity of a Supreme Church Administration, which later endeavored to appropriate the "rights and functions of the all-Russian church power," the convention also assumed the political task of formulating a demand for the restoration of a monarchy in Russia, and two-thirds of the participants declared themselves in favor of the Romanov dynasty. N. Markov, one of the most notorious monarchist politicians of the old régime, made a public statement to the effect that the majority of the convention deemed it their duty to state openly what "the church, which remained in Russia, was unable to say," for the "Holy Patriarch was threatened with danger." This statement greatly facilitated the task of those who wanted to accuse Tikhon of connection with the Karlovtsy Convention. It must be added that the convention also published an appeal to the army of General Wrangel, and that in January 1922 Anthony pleaded to the Genoa Conference for intervention in Russia. "People of Europe and the entire world," he wrote, "have pity on this people and supply its sons with ammunition."

Soon after that Krasikov, a member of the Soviet Commissariat for Justice, directly accused the Patriarch of secret cooperation with the Karlovtsy Convention and demanded that Tikhon should excommunicate those of its members who were his subordinates, for "conspiracy and treason." The Patriarch replied that he could not excommunicate anyone who was not within his territorial jurisdiction. Later, on April 22, 1922, he issued a decree abolishing the Supreme Church Administration outside of Russia. Nevertheless

the accusation against the Patriarch still remained, and evidently was the chief reason for his subsequent persecution. His enemies insisted that there was a direct connection between the intensification in the activities of the church and the Genoa Conference, "about which a rumor was circulated in church circles that it would cause the downfall of the Soviet government"

To prove this point Tikhon's opponents, the "Renovators," cited in particular the Patriarch's decree published in the autumn of 1921, which prohibited any innovations in the church under threats of extreme penalty. In their opinion "this decree, being the apogee of Tikhon's conservatism, was at the same time the breaking point in the history of Tikhonism." In fact, it was at that time that the Renovators, reduced to despair by the "psychologically unacceptable" decree, undertook their decisive offensive. An opportune reason for attacking the Patriarch was provided by the controversy over the question of donating church valuables to help those stricken by famine. As early as September 1921, A. Vvedensky sent an appeal to the *Red Gazette* begging church people "to share the valuables of their churches with the famished." This appeal was never published. On February 19, 1922, the Patriarch himself requested the clergy to donate the "unconsecrated" articles of value to the famine sufferers, and on the following day there appeared in the *Petersburg Pravda* another letter of Vvedensky, in which he emphasized the inadequacy of Tikhon's proposal. This letter served as a prelude to the governmental edict of February 23 on the confiscation, within a month, of all the articles of value not immediately required for religious purposes, which previously had been assigned to the groups of the faithful, to be used for relief in the famine-stricken districts. On February 28 the Patriarch replied with the famous proclamation which actually caused the breaking point in the relations between the Soviet government and "Tikhon's church."

This proclamation declared the act of the Soviet government to be sacrilegious. The Patriarch disapproved the voluntary surrender of consecrated articles, as being prohibited by the canons, and regarded it as a sacrilege for which laymen should be excommunicated and priests unfrocked. Distributed throughout Russia, the proclamation provoked a new outburst of resistance against the execution of the Soviet decree of February 23. The official statistics

record as many as 1,414 bloody conflicts, which led to a series of trials in Moscow, Petrograd, Smolensk, etc. The strongest impression was produced by an action brought on June 10 against Benjamin, the Metropolitan of Petrograd, and his execution on July 6. The trial of the Metropolitan, whom even his antagonist, Boiarsky, described as a saint, disclosed, among other things, that a complete agreement had been reached between the leaders of the anti-Tikhon movement in the church and the Soviet authorities. The decision to summon Benjamin to trial, which was taken only after several months of procrastination, was due to the fact that he had dared to interdict Vvedensky until this hierarch should repent. During the trial both Vvedensky and another Renovator, Vladimir Krasnitsky, a former member of a reactionary organization and an anti-Semite, acted as chief prosecutors.

By this time active measures had been taken by the opposition against the Patriarch. On March 25 there appeared in the *Izvestia* a letter of twelve priests, known as the Vvedensky's group, quoting the declarations of Archbishops Eudoxius, Seraphinus, and Metrophanes in favor of the surrender of church valuables for the relief of the famine sufferers. The letter severely censored all those who "had no wish to help," accusing them of formalism and lack of Christian love, and appealed to the faithful to donate even the consecrated vessels in view of the alleged willingness of the lay authorities to let the church itself feed the famished directly.

There is sufficient evidence to prove that the choice of the moment for a decisive campaign against Tikhon's church and the forming of an alliance for this purpose with the "Living Church" was deliberately made by the Soviet power in the spring of 1922. As Krasnitsky stated in August of that same year, "The state authorities suggested in the spring that the church change its policy. . . . This met with complete agreement on our part." The same was confirmed by Titlinov: "External conditions made our move possible, for precisely at that time the revolutionary authorities were ready to support a new movement<sup>1</sup> within the church, even

<sup>1</sup> According to the Bolsheviks, the suggestion came from the Renovators. E. Iaroslavsky, in his articles published in 1923-24, repeatedly asserted that "frequently priests called on the Committees of the Party requesting to enlist them as party members, and sometimes they even wanted to organize special groups of communist

though it remained foreign to them. Thus the church innovators crossed their Rubicon."

At the meeting of the Council of People's Commissars, in the month of April 1922, following the motion by Trotsky, it was decided that the policy towards the church should assume an aggressive character, while as explained by an article in the *Pravda*, the confiscation of valuables "should serve to sunder the crumbling body of the former state church." "We shall profit by the discord existing among the clergy," Stepanov stated, "with the sole purpose of drawing the people away from all and every religion." Thus each of the temporary allies was pursuing a different object, and only the stronger could win.

The circumstances were particularly profitable for dealing a decisive blow at the Patriarchal church. The legal proceedings in Moscow against certain anti-Bolshevik groups implicated patriarch Tikhon, who even before that was suspected of connections with the émigrés, and it was decided to bring him to trial. This moment was seized by the opposition group, evidently with the consent of the authorities, to send a delegation to the Patriarch. On May 12, the delegates called on Tikhon and told him that he was held morally responsible for the execution of the thirteen people condemned to die the following day in Moscow. Then Krasnitsky enumerated the accusations brought by the Soviet government against the Patriarch; apart from his proclamations, Tikhon was charged with sending consecrated bread to Emperor Nicholas II, when the Tsar was held prisoner in Ekaterinburg, with transforming the church into a political organization, and with ordaining avowed supporters of the monarchical régime. Finally, the delegates demanded the immediate convocation of

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priests But we tried to avoid such helpers and allies      Our ways were far apart . . ."

This information was confirmed on June 9, 1923, by a correspondent of the *London Times*, who had the original of the petition submitted by the priests in the spring of 1922 to the All-Union Central Executive Committee in which they asked permission to organize communist groups, and expressed their intention of opening them in every center of the Orthodox church, and so establish a spy system over the Patriarch's functionaries and force the church to assist the government in the realization of its communist plans. The same correspondent was also told by one of the hierarchs in support of this information that "unfortunately we are bound down by secret agents who are using us as political tools"



another Church Council and the complete withdrawal of the Patriarch from church administration, until the time when the Council could make decisions. All this was repeated in an address to the faithful, printed in the *Izvestia* on May 14. It was clear that the demands of the opposition were supported by the government.

The Patriarch yielded to the force of circumstances and wrote to Bishop Agathangel, proposing that the latter should take his place. This was followed by Tikhon's arrest at the Trinity Monastery. Agathangel was also arrested, with the obvious aim of creating an opportunity for the Renovators to assume the administration of the church. On May 18 Vvedensky and his colleagues sent a letter to Tikhon in which they told him of having asked the authorities for permission to open his chancery and, in a "filial" way, entreated his blessing that they might assume the administration of church affairs. After another long conversation with the members of the group, the Patriarch gave his consent and wrote his resolution on their letter, assigning synodal affairs to the care of the Renovators, for subsequent transfer to Agathangel, and those of the Moscow diocese to the keeping of Bishop Leonidas, pending the arrival of Bishop Innocent. But Innocent was not admitted to Moscow, and Leonidas, because of his advanced age, refused to undertake the responsibility of diocesan affairs, and so finally the group applied to Bishop Antoninus, who under the autocracy had suffered for refusing to name the Tsar as Autocrat in his prayers after the October Manifesto of 1905. In the meantime the Patriarch had been transferred to the Don Monastery, and without his authorization the Renovators organized a Provisional Supreme Church Administration, which included the entire group under the leadership of Antoninus.

On the same day, May 18, the group now in power published an appeal to the people, in the *Izvestia* and *Pravda*, which stated that by the "will of God" Russia had a Workmen's and Peasants' Government, whose aim it was to save the country from the ghastly after-effects of the war, and that the church was assisting it in its struggle for justice and the welfare of humanity. It accused the higher hierarchs of having gone over to the enemies of the people and to have become engaged in counter-revolutionary activities. They had refused help to those stricken by famine and they strove

to bring about the downfall of the Soviet state. The authors of the appeal, as "representatives of the wide church circles," condemned these hierarchs and deemed it necessary to convoke a Local Council to solve the problem of church administration and to establish "normal relations between the church and the Soviet government." In this way the victors did their duty towards the Bolsheviks, at the same time attempting to justify themselves before the masses and to win their support.

It very soon became evident that church affairs were controlled not only by the Commissariat for Justice, in charge of church legislation, but by still another factor having no regard for law. Entering upon a systematic and active struggle against the church, the Communist Party resorted to its secret police force, and later on, when the "All-Union State Political Department" (i. e., the GPU) had been organized, the management of church affairs was entrusted to a special "Third Department of the Office of Secret Operations," at the head of which was the notorious E. A. Tuchkov, familiarly known as "the new Chief Procurator of the Russian Church." The commissioners of the Third Department were to be found in every local office of the GPU, and from that moment in all the efforts at "legalization" made by various church groups, which had accepted the conditions of living under the Soviet government, the iron fist of Tuchkov and his subordinates was felt. The very term "legalization" reminded one of the attitude of the old régime towards the political parties, and was absolutely contrary to the idea of freedom of conscience, as promised to all creeds.

The time came for the victorious group to profit by the agreement with the Soviet government and to establish its "self-determination." A foundation was laid by assuming the name of "Living Church" and by starting the publication of a periodical on May 5, 1922, under the same title. The new periodical demanded a radical change in the personnel of the church hierarchy, preached cessation of civil strife between the church and the Soviet state, advocated the principle of separation of church and state, and announced, in a somewhat vague form, a general transition of the church from its traditional inertia to the "dynamic, vital, and creative progress from one attainment to another." Moreover, the Living Church demanded the abolition of "soulless formalism" in the perform-

ance of the divine service, and combated the despotism of the bishops; it insisted upon the secular (i. e., married) clergy being admitted to the episcopate. On these grounds it was decided to form a party of the Living Church, and so on May 29, 1922, a convention of 146 delegates met in Moscow. However, only thirty-six of those present joined the new organization. In view of the character of the platform, this result is not astonishing. It contained an unconventional treatment of the traditional Christian dogmas supplemented with a program of Christian socialism. The justice of social revolution and the idea of the universal union of workmen for protection against exploitation were recognized. The necessity to free the liturgical forms from superstition and survivals of paganism, the elimination of antiquated canonical rules, extensive participation in parish life by the laity, and the right to elect married priests to bishoprics, representation of the lower clergy in the higher church administration—such were the other planks in the Living Church program.

Not until the end of June did the final organization of the party on these principles take place, and even then under protest from the assembled public, especially the women. Archpriest Vladimir Krasnitsky was placed at the head of the presiding council. This was followed by an All-Russian Conference of the Living Church at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, at which twenty-four dioceses were represented by 169 delegates. It lasted from August 6 to 16, and was rife with discord. The more moderate elements were satisfied to bring the church out of the impasse to which it had been led by Tikhon and the Council's struggle against the Soviet state, but the majority went further in its demands and, under the leadership of Krasnitsky, aimed at a decisive victory for the secular over the regular clergy, i. e., over the bishops and monks. The antagonists of the Living Church saw in this the central idea of the movement. Thus in the opinion of Prof. Troitsky, for instance,

The Living Church was nothing else but a revolt of priests, or, to use the canonical language, a presbyterian schism, created by the pride of the metropolitan clergy. Since olden days the Petrograd "Fathers," chosen from among the most gifted students of the theological academies, had occupied privileged positions in the church and had far-reaching connections in various groups of society, beginning with the Imperial

Court and the higher bureaucracy and ending with labor leaders, the future rulers of Russia.

Such was the social background of the Living Church movement. This did not exclude the elements of sincere Presbyterianism though of course they were very unlike those of the Reformation period. The Living Church did not demand the abolition of the episcopate, but wanted to limit its power in the church and insisted upon the admission of the secular clergy into its ranks, thus sanctioning matrimony for bishops. Previous to the August conference, in accordance with this view, several consecrations had already taken place, but at the conference itself serious differences of opinion developed on this subject even among the majority members. Bishop Antoninus and his followers did not agree that married priests should be consecrated bishops, and, in contradiction to the Living Church, they also considered that if a monk left the monastery, he thereby forfeited his priesthood and monkhood. During the vote on the question of the episcopate, the Living Church had thirty-seven episcopal votes, but thirty-six were against it, and twenty-four abstained from voting and assumed a neutral attitude.

The conference's chief purpose was, however, not to introduce reforms but to organize for struggle. It was necessary to make preparations for a new Church Council and to fulfill the political obligations towards the Bolsheviks. So the first resolution passed by the conference was that Patriarch Tikhon, being guilty of producing church discord, had to be unfrocked, and that all bishops opposed or merely passive towards the policy of the Living Church had to be deprived of their rights, and have a penance imposed on them. The parish councils that were antagonistic to the local progressive priests had to be dismissed. Before closing, the conference issued a proclamation to the people in which the whole history of the church struggle was interpreted in terms of social revolution, and the old church was violently denounced for its alleged co-operation with such enemies of the people as Kolchak, Denikin, and the fugitive bishops of the Karlovtsy Council. The bishops, the Tsarist government, and the "capitalists" were charged with having persecuted the secular clergy and the laity, all the "suffering

and the oppressed." Prompted by the Karlovtsy Council, the "princes of the church" under the Patriarch's leadership had attempted to start another civil war by pretending to protect the church valuables from confiscation. This "filled the cup of endurance to overflowing, and the faithful sons of the Orthodox church felt compelled to take revolutionary measures for the renovation of the church, on the grounds of biblical principles and apostolic traditions."

However, not all the Renovators were willing to accept the politician Krasnitsky's program and methods, and on August 20, 1922, the majority, headed by Antoninus, decided to leave the new party and form a separate organization under the name of "Regeneration of the Church." Like the Living Church it insisted upon the return to the democracy of apostolic days and on the liberation of religion and cult from medieval superstitions. But while agreeing to a free election of priests by the parishioners, the group of Antoninus did not entirely repudiate monasticism, and differed from the Living Church on the above indicated points; moreover, it directed its appeal to the popular masses rather than the lower church strata. Being comparatively moderate, the group of Antoninus had great initial success, attracting to its ranks thousands of Moscow priests and laity, and many followers of the Living Church from Petersburg.

The secession of Dean Alexander Vvedensky from the Living Church bore a more personal character. The gifted preacher and outstanding promoter of the renovation movement, disagreeing on many points in its program and not finding in it what he wished, formed his own group, known as the "Ancient Apostolic Church."

In carrying out their plan of action, the leaders of the Living Church applied themselves to a preliminary purging of the church, in order to have the majority at the election to the Council. This preparation caused postponement of the convocation of the Council: first, to February 2 and then until April 29, 1923. The purge was given unexpected support by Vladimir Lvov, the man who, in his capacity as Chief Procurator, was responsible for the first purge in the pre-revolutionary Synod and who now was a member of the new Supreme Church Administration. In the *Izvestia* of August 2, 1922, he ascribed the grievous results of the Council of 1917-18 to

the reactionary majority of the hierarchs of those days, and demanded that the church be purified of every reactionary element, as only then could the new Council carry out the desired reforms. Notwithstanding the separation of church and state, the government, in Lvov's opinion, was obliged to take an active part in the purge, since the church and more particularly the parish councils served as a last refuge for its reactionary antagonists. Thus did Lvov anticipate the procedure later decided upon by the Congress of August 6, 1922

It was obvious that the Living Church, in alliance with the government, was bent upon the complete destruction of the Tikhonian Orthodox church. In order to strike at the very root of the church organization, the newly created Supreme Church Administration sent fifty-six delegates to the dioceses, investing them with unlimited power and promising full support from the Soviet authorities, including the GPU. They were to "select in all dioceses from the mass of the Orthodox church people the adherents to their ideas, to organize them, and then entrust to them the charge of local church administration." Organizations that were not registered were proclaimed closed by the decree of August 10, 1922. This suddenly severed all connection between local religious groups and the central church administration, which had been deprived of legal existence. At first, when the emissaries of the Supreme Church Administration arrived at their destination, they declared themselves agents of the Patriarch, winning over thereby several bishops and a large number of the clergy; but soon the deceit was discovered. Metropolitan Agathangel strove to preserve the existence of the dioceses by acknowledging them "autocephalous" and proposing to organize meetings of the faithful. "Notwithstanding the extreme vigilance of the GPU," as the *Izvestia* admitted on August 28, 1922, "a series of secret meetings of the faithful were held in Vladimir, Kursk, Riazan, Perm, and other cities, and everywhere it was resolved to disavow the Supreme Church Administration and support Patriarch Tikhon."

After this the Living Church resorted to compulsory measures. The Petrograd Diocesan Executive Committee decreed that all clergymen who had repudiated the Supreme Church Administration should be dismissed. On December 13, 1922, seventy-four

active members of the church were sentenced to imprisonment in Moscow, as happened also in Kiev, Odessa, Minsk, Ekaterinoslav, and other diocesan cities, and by the end of 1923 sixty-six bishops had been banished. In the meantime the Supreme Church Administration waged war on the lower levels of church organization—the parish councils which had been formed in accordance with the regulations of the Council of 1917–18. In 1922, during the August Conference of the Living Church, it was decided “to dismiss at once those of the parish councils that were opposed to the renovation movement, and to constitute new ones composed of persons recommended, on his responsibility, by the archpriest of each parish.” In another resolution it was clearly stated that only those who adhered to the principles of the Living Church could be regarded as qualified lay members of a parish. A special deputation from the conference petitioned Kalinin, then the chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, to cancel the agreements made by the Provisional Executive Committee with the Orthodox parish councils and to sequester their churches. In many localities (White Russia and Kiev) the parishes were actually registered anew. After six months of systematic purging, the bishops of the Patriarchal church were almost entirely debarred from taking part in the elections; some already had been shut up in prisons or sent into exile, others had taken refuge abroad, while among those who remained, some boycotted the elections because they regarded the very convocation of the Council as non-canonical. Small wonder that out of 430 members of the Council there were only forty-five belonging to the Patriarchal party. The electoral procedure was the same as in the case of the First Council, but the purging of the parish councils and the support of the government had their results. Two hundred and fifty delegates, i. e., the absolute majority, belonged to the party of the Living Church, while the remaining 135 were distributed between the two other trends. 110 belonged to the Ancient Apostolic Church of Vvedensky, and 25, of a more moderate reformatory tinge, joined Antoninus in the “Regeneration of the Church.” Thus the lower strata of the church, following in the footsteps of the upper, sincerely or insincerely, turned to radicalism, and so the Council of 1923 was destined to represent the extreme radical tendency in the church. Signifi-

cantly and in distinction from the procedure of 1917-18, the supreme authority of the Council of Bishops over the decisions of the Council had been abolished.

Once more the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour was to witness the solemn act of opening the Council, this time under the chairmanship of Antoninus. At the second sitting, on May 2, upon a motion by Vvedensky, there was unanimously passed a resolution praising the Soviet government. The Second Council thanked the authorities for allowing them to assemble, and emphasized the identity of the "great principles of the October Revolution" with those of Christianity. The next day, in his absence, the question of Tikhon's deposal was raised and, following the hearing of his indictment supported by fifty-four out of the sixty-six hierarchs present and an impassioned speech delivered by Vvedensky, it was promptly solved. The Council then adopted a resolution, read by the chairman, with one voting against and five abstaining from voting. In it the Council "testified that the world was divided into two camps—the exploiting capitalists and the proletariat"—and that the Soviet government was the only government in the world to originate a struggle against the social evil. It also proclaimed capitalism a "deadly sin, and the struggle against it a sacred duty for every Christian." The Council appealed to "every honest Christian citizen of Russia to join in a united front under the leadership of the Soviet government in the war against the universal social evil." The First Council and the Patriarch were accused of counter-revolutionary activities; the church ban imposed upon the Soviet government was declared invalid; Tikhon was called a traitor to the church, was divested of his priestly and monastic rank and was to become again a mere layman resuming his own name, Basil Belavin. The Soviet government was not to be regarded as that of Antichrist; on the contrary, it alone could realize the ideals of God's Kingdom on earth. The Council proclaimed the reestablishment of the Patriarchate a counter-revolutionary measure, and decided to restore in the church the conciliar system of government. On the same evening it sanctioned the election of married priests to bishoprics, while on the following day the right to conclude a second marriage was granted the priests but not the bishops. In addition to this the Council condemned the practice of falsifying the



relics of the saints, basing its action on an investigation made at an earlier date by the Soviet authorities, and it also decided to close the monasteries, replacing them with communistic fraternities. Simultaneously the Council adopted the Gregorian calendar. The counter-revolutionary hierarchs and priests who had escaped abroad were excluded from the church; Vvedensky was consecrated Metropolitan, and a new Supreme Church Council was elected. Of this body ten members belonged to the Living Church, six to the Ancient Apostolic Church, and two to the Regeneration of the Church; out of the eighteen members twelve were priests, one a laymen, and only five were bishops. Evidently the direct object of all these decisions was consideration for the interests of the secular clergy, while the laity was treated with distrust. From the political point of view, the orders of the GPU were carefully complied with.

It appeared that the Living Church had obtained from its alliance with the government all that it desired, but the dangers of this alliance and the spuriousness of the victory achieved immediately became evident. The Orthodox masses showed a stern disapproval of the undertaking, as one of its promoters, Prof. Titlinov, was forced to admit in 1923.

A huge majority of the clergy and church communities refused to recognize the new church administration, and the names of the leaders became odious; Dean A. Vvedensky had a stone thrown at his head, while others were threatened with stoning, but were protected by the militia. Bishops and priests of the Living Church could not officiate without being disturbed, neither could they show themselves in the churches nor on the street without being publicly insulted. Among the illiterate masses rumors were circulated on the advent of Antichrist, and they asserted in Petrograd that Dean Vvedensky drove in a car having on it the stamp of Antichrist, only turned upside down (999). At public meetings of the Living Church the antagonistic attitude of many people was quite striking.

From different sources we know that the mood of the masses was expressed in numerous acts of violence directed against the members of the Living Church. For instance, at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, V. D. Krasnitsky was beaten until he lost consciousness; Evdokimov, a priest of the Living Church, was murdered in

Iaroslavl; another representative of that church, Serebriakov, was cruelly beaten in Tsaritsyn, while the same fate befell Bishop Theodosius in Poltava, and another bishop in Odessa was ejected from the church by the crowd.

Naturally, the Bolsheviks could not be satisfied with such a result of their alliance with the Living Church. Their hope of splitting the Orthodox church proved to be an illusion, and it became evident that the triumph of the Renovators was not a real victory over the established church. Since it seemed advisable to resort to other means in order to disarm the church, why not try for a direct settlement with the Tikhonians? The Bolsheviks, of course, must have known that their object would never be attained by making a martyr of Tikhon. In his turn, the Patriarch also realized that with the end of the civil war it would be useless for him or the church he still represented to persist in the old irreconcilable attitude. Tikhon was facing a trial, and admission cards for the occasion were already being distributed in Moscow when, according to his own testimony, the authorities gave him to understand that if he agreed to issue a specific statement he would be released from prison. To the surprise of the public the facsimile of a statement written by Tikhon on the eve of his trial, June 15, 1923, was published in the *Izvestia* on the first of July. In this statement the Patriarch admitted that he "actually had been antagonistic towards the Soviet government, and that occasionally his passive enmity had become intensely active." He agreed that his actions, "with but a few inaccuracies, had been correctly stated in the report of the Church Tribunal," and he recognized the validity of his indictment, in accordance with the articles of the criminal code, for the anti-Soviet activities. "I repent of these offenses against the Soviet régime," wrote Tikhon, "and I beg the Supreme Court . . . to free me from arrest, upon which I vow that from now on I shall never be an enemy to the Soviet government. I will draw a definite and strict line between myself and all monarchist and White Guards counter-revolutionaries, both within and outside the boundaries of Russia."

As was to be expected, the exiled monarchists preferred to see in Tikhon's declaration either a forgery or an admission forcibly extorted from the Patriarch. But Tikhon knew what he was doing. he was restoring to his Tikhonian church the possibility of a legal

existence in Soviet Russia, as well as the opportunity of organizing a defense against the aggressive attempts of the Renovators. The Soviet government, for its part, now entered upon a new stage in the religious struggle, and, as a direct attack on the Orthodox church from the outside proved unsuccessful, it was decided to try to control it from within.

The Patriarch profited by his return to the Don Monastery to issue a statement, on July 15, in which he censured the activities of the Living Church. He reviewed the circumstances in which the members of the Living Church had appropriated his chancery, instead of transferring it to Agathangel (see page 173), and he repudiated their statement that they had obtained power from him, pointing out that it was impossible to bestow the authority of a bishop on secular clergymen, and reminding his opponents that an arbitrary seizure of a diocese was punishable by unfrocking (Article 16 of the Antioch Council). The usurpers had further aggravated their position by consecrating new bishops for the dioceses sequestered by them, and had placed themselves without the church. Therefore all their actions during the Patriarch's absence were void. Reassuming the authority, which had been delegated to Agathangel, Tikhon summoned the faithful bishops to assist him in conciliating the church, and invited those who had been seduced to repent. Among the latter was Sergius, the future *Locum Tenens* of the Patriarchal See, who performed his penance in the garb of a simple monk. The churches in Moscow immediately rallied around the Patriarch and the masses followed their example, so that the faithful again crowded the Patriarchal churches, while those of the Renovators were deserted.

The Living Church had compromised itself in the opinion of the people by its relations with the Bolsheviks and the radicalism of the new ideas it introduced into religion. In this last respect, however, it tried to act with caution. All radical plans resulting from its program of reform, both in the field of doctrine and cult, were relegated by the Council to a special committee for further discussions, in which the entire body of the church had to participate. But there were some external circumstances which produced such an unfavorable impression on the masses that the victors themselves were forced to make concessions. In the first place, the Renovators saw

the danger of being divided into three groups, for it alienated them from the traditional forms of church organization and led the masses to mistake them for sects. The retirement of Bishop Antoninus on June 29, 1923, as chairman, had discredited them still further. The Patriarchal church was headed by a Holy Synod, which included some of the eldest bishops, so the Renovated Church also started to seek for an "elder" to take the place of Antoninus, and they found him in Eudoximus of Odessa. Eudoximus laid down the following conditions that all groups of Renovators should dissolve their organizations and renounce their titles; that the Supreme Church Administration should be renamed the Holy Synod, and that at the consecration of bishops preference should be extended to monks. Evidently these three conditions were aimed at pacifying the masses, and the truth is that early in August 1923, at the plenary meeting of the members of the Council of 1923, it was resolved to organize a single party based on "Synodal Democracy" in opposition to the "Patriarchal Autocracy." After several days of heated arguments the plenum voted to support Eudoximus' motion, declaring for the dissolution of the groups; transforming the Administration into the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, under the chairmanship of Eudoximus, and deciding to include in the synodal body several of the eldest bishops who had not yet joined Tikhon. Vvedensky agreed to bring into the new party his entire group of the Apostolic Church, and although Krasnitsky refused to join with his Living Church, a majority of his followers abandoned him for the new church organization. Antoninus with his Union of Church Regeneration, which likewise refused to join, also lost the greater part of his adherents.

The New Church, which called itself Synodal, advanced the principle of conciliarity. It professed submission to the Councils of 1917 and 1923, but demanded the same submission from the Patriarch, who regarded the Council of 1923 as non-canonical. In its proclamation to the Orthodox Christians, published in the *Izvestia* on August 12, 1923, the new Synod announced the change that had taken place and emphasized the fact that the New Church was preserving "Holy Orthodoxy in brotherly accord with the Holy Ecumenical Patriarchs," who had sent formal greetings to its chair-

man, but none to the Patriarch. In fact, although the Patriarchs had severely condemned Tikhon's deposal by the Second Council, only the Patriarch of Antioch continued to hold this opinion, while Gregory VII of Constantinople, being in need of the Bolsheviks' political help, instructed his delegates to support the party loyal to the Soviet government, and on May 6, 1924, he demanded that for the sake of peace in the church Tikhon should surrender the administration of the church, as an act of self-sacrifice. The Synod in Constantinople supported this idea and proposed to abolish "though temporarily" the Patriarchate and to establish a supreme administration, based on the principle of a synodal council. Tikhon protested against this non-canonical interference by the Patriarch of Constantinople, but it did not prevent the latter's delegates from expressing themselves in favor of the Synodal Church, nor Gregory VII from sending a representative to the Synod of the New Church. This example was followed by the Patriarch of Alexandria and then, on July 9, 1926, after some slight hesitation, they were joined by the Patriarch of Jerusalem. The New Church also enjoyed the sympathy and financial support of the American Methodist Episcopal Church, in the name of which Bishop Edgar Blake participated in the Council of 1923. All this served to strengthen the position of the Synodal Church among the masses, the more so as it continued its evolution towards moderation. Thus it postponed the passing of resolutions on the two questions so vexatious to the faithful—that of married bishops and the right of the priests to remarry—and decided to refer these questions to the Eighth Ecumenical Council. The adoption of the Gregorian calendar, which affected the celebration of Orthodox holidays, was left to the free choice of each parish. In February 1925 Eudoximus was replaced by Benjamin, one of the oldest of the pre-revolutionary hierarchs. The party agreed upon the idea of an All-Russian Church Administration formed on a federal basis, and so established independent church administrations in the Ukraine, White Russia, Siberia, and the Far East, as well as in the United States of America and in Western Europe. While Tikhon's stronghold was in Moscow and North Russia, the Synodal Church retained its influence over the Russian South. Having won support on all its resolutions at the Moscow Convention of June 10-18, 1924, at

which there were present 466 delegates, 83 of whom were bishops, the Synodal Church began its preparations for the Council of 1925.

In those days Patriarch Tikhon realized that, in view of the energetic activities and successes of his adversaries, he could not remain idle, but in order to start activities on his part he had to obtain the government's authorization. He asked the Bolsheviks to authorize him to convoke a Council and to organize that part of the Church which had remained loyal to him, whereupon he was made to understand clearly that none of this would be granted to him if he continued his relations with the counter-revolutionary elements or surrounded himself with people whom the government could not trust. As a practical solution, the Patriarch was advised to form a union with the remnants of the Living Church and to introduce Krasnitsky as vice-chairman of the Church Administration, to which Tikhon consented. In a petition written by Krasnitsky he asked the Patriarch to admit him "and his brethren, who might wish to follow his example," to work "on the reestablishment of peace within the Church and the arrangements for the next Local Council" in the Church Administration organized by Tikhon. The Patriarch replied to this petition on the same day, May 19, 1924, by giving his consent to Krasnitsky's being included among the members of the Supreme Church Administration. Subsequently there was formed a provisional bureau for preparation of the convocation of the Council, consisting of twelve members, of whom five were appointed by the Patriarch and the others, headed by Krasnitsky, belonged to the Living Church, while the supreme power rested with the Synod of Bishops presided over by the Patriarch.

All these schemes aroused intense opposition on the part of Tikhon's own followers, and ultimately he was forced to declare the attempt at a coalition with the Living Church a failure. Krasnitsky and his adherents resigned and simultaneously the government refused its support.

The Synodal Church was much pleased with the failure of the Living Church, and it tried to profit by the distressing situation in which the Patriarch found himself to win him over to its side. In May 1924 several members of the Pre-Council Conference at-

tempted to approach Tikhon, but they failed because the Patriarch realized that the Synodal Church was far more dangerous to him than the Living Church. The Conference then passed a resolution "To continue the irreconcilable fight against the Tikhonians and to regard any compromise with them equally damaging from either the political or the church point of view."

Ill health put an end to Tikhon's further activities. His final views on church policy were formed during his fatal illness and found expression in his "Testament," which proved again that he strove to master the lessons taught by life and to find for his followers a more favorable ground in their struggle against the chief menace, the possible success of the Synodal Church. The ground lay in absolute loyalty towards the government, for only then could the struggle be conducted on an equal footing.

However, in writing his appeal the Patriarch never thought it would be his last testament, for he believed fully in his recovery and even dated the document from the Don Monastery, to which he expected to return on leaving the hospital. But he died on that same day, April 7, 1925. On December 25, 1924 (January 7, 1925) he had written an order by which the patriarchal rights were to descend to Metropolitan Cyril or Agathangel, and, should they be unable to accept the legacy, to Metropolitan Peter Krutitsky until the constitutional election of a new Patriarch. It was Metropolitan Peter who became *Locum Tenens*, and a week after Patriarch Tikhon's death, Peter published in the *Izvestia* the late Patriarch's "Testament," in which it was stated that the Soviet power was at the head of the Russian state "by the will of God," that by its decree of January 1918 it had "secured . . . for our Orthodox church the right to exist and to conduct its religious affairs according to the requirements of faith, so long as it did not violate the order and the rights of other citizens," and that therefore he, the Patriarch, accepted the new order of things and wholeheartedly welcomed the authority of workmen and peasants "Opposed to any compromise in the realm of religion, in our attitude towards civil affairs we must be loyal to the Soviet government . . . condemning any association with its enemies and the spreading of either open or secret propaganda against it" The Patriarch especially blamed the "archpriests and priests who had deserted their

country and started activities abroad harmful to the church." He asserted definitely that he had no connection with them, and once more confirmed the condemnation of the so-called Karlovtsy Council, threatening that "any further attempts of that kind would force us to take radical measures, such as to interdict the priests and bring the Council to trial." He appealed to the émigré clergy to cease their political activities and have the courage to return home, while within Russia he addressed especially the church parish societies, begging them "to prevent . . . anti-government activities and not to cherish the hope for a restoration of the monarchy," for "the Soviet government is the true popular power of the workmen and peasants, and so it will be lasting and stable." The object of all his advice was to "direct the activities of the Orthodox societies away from politics and towards the strengthening of the Orthodox faith, because the enemies of Holy Orthodoxy—Sectarians, Catholics, Protestants, Renovators, Atheists, and all such people—were trying to use every moment in the life of the Orthodox church to its detriment."

In his appeal the Patriarch advised the Patriarchal Church to employ the same methods as those of the Synodal Church, and in this way brought them rather closer to each other. Soon after his death, the Synod of the New Church made an offer of conciliation to Peter, the Locum Tenens. The meeting of the All-Russian Council was scheduled for the next autumn, and the Holy Synod, anxious to insure its success, appealed to all the clergy in the Moscow diocese "to put an end to the present discord, to forget our mutual wrongs and misunderstandings in the name of the Resurrected Christ and unite in preparatory work. . . . The Holy Synod deems it is time to forget the words 'Tikhonians' and 'New Church' and to remember only that we are all the children of one mother—the Orthodox church." As this offer remained unanswered, the Synod made another attempt by announcing on June 13 that the clergy and laymen, not acknowledging the Council of 1923, were invited to participate in preparations for the Council of 1925 and in the elections, on equal terms with the others. It added, however, that should the bishops and the clergy refuse to come to an agreement, the diocesan administration would appeal directly to the faithful "to terminate at this Council the dissension



within the church, which had been provoked by the higher hierarchs of the old church." In a private conversation held at that time Peter said that he could give no answer to the proposal, because he was only a *Locum Tenens* and must first convoke all the bishops, a great number of whom were abroad or in prison, and that he requested the New Church to use its good offices for their liberation. The representatives of the New Church replied that this was a political question which they were not prepared to discuss, and the negotiations came to an end. Subsequently Peter published a message in which he took a definitely uncompromising stand. "At present," he wrote, "the so-called 'New Church' discusses more and more frequently a reunion with us. Meetings are held in towns and villages at which the Orthodox clergy and laymen are invited to debate this question and the preparations for their pseudo-Council." But the canonical regulations "prohibit any participation in such assemblies and particularly in the elections," for, in accordance with the twentieth rule of the Antioch Council, "no one is allowed to convoke a Council without the consent of the bishops, who are at the head of the Metropolitan Sees," and no legal act could be executed "without our approbation in collaboration with all the members of the established Orthodox hierarchy." Peter also reminded the New Church of its resolutions at the illegal Council of 1923, and finished by stating that the "reunion was possible only in the event that every one of them should confess his errors and submit to public penitence for his apostasy." The New Church answered this by three proclamations calling the masses of the Patriarch's adherents to take the matter into their hands, and then requested all the diocesan authorities to join its party. Here again the Soviet government tried to be of assistance by arresting and banishing those who were obdurate and by exercising pressure upon the irresolute, but even with this help the efforts of the New Church remained without success.

In accordance with tradition the Third Council met on October 1, 1926, at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow. The delegates, numbering 345, were elected from 17,000 parishes; there were 100 bishops, 120 priests, and 125 laymen; 314 delegates were from Great Russia, 7 from White Russia, and 13 from the Ukraine. Also, there were present the representatives of the Patriarchs of

Constantinople and Alexandria, and as an observer the French Jesuit d'Herbigny, while the autocephalous churches sent greetings. Out of the entire body of the Council only forty-two members were in favor of a peace with the Tikhonians, the others supported the New Church platform, although the majority had come with mandates for reunion. The address, expressing loyalty to the government, the sending of which had become obligatory, was less affected and flattering than that of the Council of 1923. The group of forty-two made a motion that Peter, the Locum Tenens, be invited to participate in the discussions on the mutual relations of the Old and New Churches, but it was discovered that a private delegation of lay Muscovites had already called on him on October 1 and received a sharp refusal, based on the non-canonical activities of the dissenting church and its "pseudo-Councils." As a preliminary condition of forgiveness and reunion the Metropolitan demanded public penitence from the Renovators, to which the members of the New Church replied by repeating their former arguments: they were not impeccable; mistakes had been committed on both sides; it was for the Council to divide the innocent from the guilty; they were willing to submit the dispute to the Ecumenical Council for final decision. At the same time, however, the Council interpreted Peter's objections as a subterfuge to conceal the actual relations of the Tikhonian church with the monarchist movement abroad, of which, it claimed, there existed documentary evidence. It was decided to postpone further negotiations until the Tikhonian hierarchy should renounce its political activities. But the Council continued to invite the collaboration of those adherents of the Old Church who did not share the politics of their leaders.

The Council confirmed the validity of all the acts of the Renovators and of their Council of 1923. But the Synodal Church declared that it

. . . definitely separated itself from such irresponsible groups as those of Dean Krasnitsky or Bishop Antoninus, for the former had long since abandoned the main channel of the church and the latter for a long time had had no connection with the Holy Synod. The Synod was not responsible either for their declarations and acts or for the dishonor they brought upon the dignity of the ecclesiastical order

This denoted a further development in the moderate tendencies. The Council sanctioned the decisions on the consecration of married bishops and the right of widowed priests to remarry, but reiterated its willingness to submit these questions to the judgment of the Ecumenical Council. Finally, having adopted the idea of church federalism, the Council sanctioned the autocephalous Ukrainian Church, as proclaimed by the Ukrainian Council on May 8, 1925.<sup>2</sup>

The accusation brought by the Council against Peter that he was persisting in his political activities was bound to provoke the civil authorities to action. The Bolsheviks repeated the experiment they had applied to Tikhon. They charged Peter with recognizing Grand Duke Cyril as Emperor, thereby making him liable to prosecution. Using this threat to influence the Metropolitan, Tuckov, in the name of the government, offered to "legalize" the Orthodox church administration provided Peter agreed to publish a declaration of a certain nature, to remove from the church all bishops whom the authorities considered unsuitable, to condemn all émigré bishops, and to keep in contact with the government. On December 23, 1925, after Peter had rejected the offer, he was arrested together with a group of Moscow hierarchs, who were his intimate friends. In compliance with the arrangements previously made by the ecclesiastical authorities, the administration of the church had to be assumed by Metropolitan Sergius of Novgorod, the Suffragan Locum Tenens. An offer of a compromise was made to Sergius by the government, which demanded that he ascertain the views of the Old Church. In a formal statement Sergius replied that the church he represented was not active in politics and was "absolutely loyal in its recognition of the government." But he reminded the authorities that the Soviet constitution guaranteed the freedom of religious propaganda, and he asked that this principle be applied to the Old Church, thus giving it the opportunity for normal activities. In regard to the émigré clergy, he declared that they formed an independent body outside his jurisdiction.

<sup>2</sup> In White Russia there was also an autonomous church, which had been proclaimed in May 1924 and had the right to send delegates to the Synodal Church Council. The Georgian church, which had announced its independence in 1917, had no canonical connection with the Russian church.

In the summer of 1926 the bishops who had been banished to the Solovetsk Islands, having perhaps heard of these negotiations, also submitted to the government a memorandum, "in the name of the leading organization of the Orthodox church and the church itself," in which all the difficulties standing in the way of mutual friendly relations between church and state and the means by which they could be eliminated were stated with complete frankness. This remarkable document excelled in the candor and lucidity of exposition, and in the logical strength of argumentation. The Solovetsk prisoners, continuing the traditions of Tikhon and his successors, strove to clarify the atmosphere of mistrust which enshrouded the church, although they did not deny that in the past political activities had taken place within the church. They explained, and actually exonerated them, by two reasons. First, that in those days "there existed no power, in the sense of an organized government, but only impostors with criminal records, calling themselves governmental agents, while all social forces were in a state of struggle," and second that at that critical time the church, imbued with state and national traditions inherited from past centuries, could not refrain from "protecting the old order, deeming that it was its duty towards the people." Subsequently, when a definite civil power had been formed, Patriarch Tikhon declared the loyalty of the church towards it and firmly refused to exercise his influence in the political life of the country. The Orthodox church could accommodate itself to any form of state organization, "from the eastern despotism of ancient Turkey to the republic of the United States of America." The law on the separation of church and state, forming a part of the Soviet constitution, "under the new political system could, to a certain extent, meet the needs of both parties. The church had no religious grounds for refusing to accept it," but it required a "strict and steadfast conformity to law," while facts proved that there was none, for "the government did not remain neutral," but was "definitely partial to atheism." This was the actual cause of discord between the Orthodox church and the state. In a series of impressive comparisons the memorandum illustrated the inconsistency in the face of which "there could be no harmony or reconciliation."

It is true [the Solovetsk prisoners wrote] that an attempt was made by the Renovators at reconciliation with the authorities. They maintained that religion within the confines of the Soviet Union was not subject to restriction. They made pitiful attempts to instill into the consciences of the faithful the idea that Christianity in its essence did not differ from Communism and that the communistic state was striving to attain the same aims as the Gospel. They tried too to revise the Christian dogmatics. As a result, this schism became a state church to which the Soviet government regardless of the laws it had enacted, and to the detriment of the Orthodox church, gave its support even to the extent of supplying the Renovators with free transportation to the Council of 1923. The Orthodox church was unable either to repeat the ignominious lie about religious freedom in the Soviet Union or to disavow the religious tenets enshrouded with the sanctity of past ages. No compromises or concessions, no partial modifications of the religious doctrine or interpretations of it in the communistic sense could bring the church to an agreement with the government, and therefore it is suffering great restrictions in its activities and religious life. It could not obtain the authority to open regular agencies of the central and diocesan administration or to transfer its activities to its historical center—Moscow, its bishops are either refused admittance to their dioceses or having gained it are forced to renounce their most essential duties, such as preaching, visiting parishes, and ordaining priests. The Locum Tenens himself and almost half of the Orthodox bishops are languishing in prison, wasting away either from banishment or forced labor. In its administrative capacity the government applied every means to suppress religion: it profited by every opportunity to close the churches<sup>3</sup> and to transform them into places for public shows, to abolish monasteries, notwithstanding that the labor principle had been introduced there, and to submit the clergy to as many restrictions in their everyday life as possible.

In view of the irreconcilable ideological differences, the conflict between the state and church could only cease with the steadfast adherence in practice to the law on the separation of church and state. The church is not aiming to overthrow the existing order . . . it did not

<sup>3</sup> According to Soviet statistics, in 29 out of 87 provinces, by Oct. 1925 there were sequestered 1,003 Orthodox churches, 29 mosques, 27 Old Ritualist churches, and 29 belonging to other creeds. One hundred and fourteen of the Orthodox churches were transformed into schools, 195 into clubs, 280 were used for educational purposes, 79 for dwellings and other exigencies, 298 remained vacant, and 6 were wrecked.

call the people to arms or to political struggle, but submitted itself to every civil law and decree. It took no part in politics and was not connected either openly or secretly with the political activities of the *émigré* bishops. But there is a limit, and by transgressing it the church might find itself in the position of a state church to which the schism of renovators had reduced itself by becoming the servant of the state. If censuring the acts of government is prohibited, then praising them should equally be prohibited, for that too is interfering in politics. The Church could not assume the obligation to the government of watching over the loyalty of its co-religionists and regarded detective work and political information as incompatible with the dignity of a priest. It exerted no influence on the individual, for every faithful one has his own reasoning power and conscience, nor could it bring either the clergy or laity to the church tribunal under a charge of political crime; on that basis Tikhon had refused the repeated demands of a representative of the GPU . . . that he prove his loyalty by condemning the Russian bishops who were acting abroad against the Soviet government.

While condemning the conduct of the *émigré* bishops, the authors of the memorandum "found it hard . . . to express their disapproval by any legal action," because, had they even decided on that, the Orthodox hierarchy would have been unable to convoke a Council for the trial or to verify the incriminating evidence collected by governmental institutions.

Pledging itself "not to conduct any political propaganda in churches, church institutions, or gatherings," the leading agency of the Orthodox church "trusted that the state would also fulfill conscientiously the obligations" undertaken by it under the law. The authors of the memorandum hoped for the revision of laws relating to the education of children and the depriving of religious societies of their right of juridical person, for the restitution of holy relics from the museums to the churches, for a permission to organize a diocesan administration and to convoke a Council for the election of the Patriarch and members of the Holy Synod, without any influence being exercised by the church upon the election or free discussion, and for the right of appointing bishops to dioceses and the Synod, with no interference on the part of governmental functionaries. "Should the petition of the church be declined,

it was ready to suffer with calm and fortitude the material privations to which it was exposed."

Sergius, on his part, requested the People's Commissar for Home Affairs to register the hierarchy of the Patriarchal church with him as Locum Tenens, and his chancery, temporarily in Nizhny Novgorod, but with the possibility of moving to Moscow. He also asked for the registration of diocesan and suffragan bishops and their chanceries, a permission to take necessary steps towards the convocation of a Council and the election of the Patriarch, a Synod, and a Supreme Church Administration, as well as for an authorization to assemble from five to fifteen bishops at conferences prior to the Council. Moreover, he asked to be allowed the publication of the *Herald of the Moscow Patriarchate* and the establishment of secondary and higher ecclesiastical schools for persons over eighteen years of age, as granted to the New Church. In his appeal to the Orthodox people, dated May 28, 1926, Sergius stated that "he had taken upon himself to assure the Soviet government of their sincere willingness to become law-abiding citizens resolved to keep aloof from political parties and activities." But "wishing to be completely frank," he inserted into his appeal two extracts from the Solovetsk bishops' memorandum. on the irreconcilable conflict between religion and atheism; and on the refusal of the church to supervise and judge the political attitude of its individual members. At the same time he pointed out, however, that it was the Christian religion that taught to forswear property, to devote life to the common cause, and to set an example of temperance, honesty, and steadfast execution of civil duties.

Some of Sergius' wishes were gratified, and on May 18, 1927, with the consent of the authorities, he established a temporary Patriarchal Holy Synod. On July 29, 1928, he wrote in a message:

Our petition that the Synod be authorized to start activities connected with the administration of the All-Russian Orthodox church has been granted. At present our Orthodox church in the Soviet Union has a central, diocesan, district, and other administrations, in accordance with the canon and civil laws

The success attained by Sergius, at a time when other bishops continued to be arrested and banished, gave rise to doubts among

some of the hierarchs, and they decided that he must have accepted all the terms for "legalization" and "capitulated."

However, it is only fair to admit that the Soviet government also made concessions. Its motives are obvious. The government and the GPU, even with the help of the Renovators, had not succeeded in abolishing the Patriarchal church. The Bolsheviks had to recognize the accuracy of the Solovetsk bishops' statement that practically all the cathedrals sequestered from the Orthodox and given to the Renovators were deserted and that the majority of Orthodox bishops imprisoned and exiled was thus punished "because of their successful struggle against the Renovators' schism." The manifest rise of religious sentiment among the masses, spurred by the conflict of church tradition with the atheist government and its servant, the New Church, such phenomena as the vast crowds of people gathered at Tikhon's funeral, the large attendance in the Patriarchal churches, and the widespread popular belief in the miraculous brightening of church domes and icons, all these revealed to the Bolsheviks the uselessness of supporting one church and persecuting another. In fact, the "Living Church was also dead," for "the object of atheists was to fight every religion." In a sense, "the protective color" adopted by the Living Church could become the most dangerous one "Quite a different matter has importance for us. Whatever it may be, let the church define its attitude towards the Soviet state and not conceal a stone in its bosom to throw at us," wrote Iaroslavsky in the *Atheist* in 1923. In a word, it was advantageous at the moment for the government to believe in the sincerity of the Patriarchal Church, when it promised to repudiate all political activities. But the repudiation and submission to the Soviet government had to be more explicitly and vigorously expressed than they were in the memorandum of the Solovetsk bishops, while all their daring reservations had to be eliminated. This explained the appearance of another message written by Sergius on July 29, 1927, in which the *Locum Tenens* emphasized the fact that the Patriarchal church had not deviated from the path formerly chosen by Tikhon. He tried to strengthen his own position by quoting Tikhon's intention "just before his death—to place our Orthodox church on proper terms with the Soviet government and thus secure for it a legal and peaceful exist-



ence." Sergius admitted frankly that "various circumstances and particularly the activities of the émigré enemies of the Soviet state, among whom were not ordinary churchmen, but even some of their leaders (i. e, bishops), aroused in the government a natural distrust of all church workers, thus impeding the task of His Holiness." "Up to the present," he continued, "the activities of the outside enemies of the Soviet government have not ceased; murder, arson, raids, explosions, and similar manifestations of an underground fight occur before our very eyes. . . . It is the more necessary . . . the more obligatory for us to prove that we, the church workers, are not with the enemies of the Soviet state and the insane agents of their intrigues, but with our people and our government." He also appealed to his flock "to express publicly our gratitude to the Soviet government for the consideration shown towards our spiritual needs," and "assure it that we will not abuse its trust." In addressing the adherents of the old order, Sergius said

To the people, who declined to perceive the signs of the times, it might appear that the break with the former régime and even with the monarchy was impossible without breaking with Orthodoxy, and such beliefs among certain ecclesiastical circles . . . had hindered the Holy Patriarch's efforts to establish peaceful relations between the church and the Soviet government. Only impractical dreamers could think that such an immense and organized society as our Orthodox church might exist peacefully in the state while refusing to have any contact with the authorities. . . . These people must bring themselves to work with us or else retire temporarily and not interfere with our task.

Finally, Sergius emphasized the fact that the question of the émigré clergy had acquired a "special poignancy," and repeated that "the open anti-Soviet activities [of this clergy] . . . had forced the late Patriarch to abolish their Synod," which "nevertheless continued to exist without changing its political attitude." "To put an end to this, we have ordered the émigré clergy to give a written promise of their absolute loyalty to the Soviet government. . . . Those who refuse to give the promise or those who break it after having given it, shall be excluded from the body of the clergy belonging to the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate." On this point Sergius went much further than the Solovetsk bishops were

prepared to go. In conclusion he explained what his purpose was in doing it: all this was necessary in order to obtain the right to "prepare for the convocation of our Second Local Council, which should elect not a provisional but a permanent central church administration" and also pass judgment on all the "usurpers of church authority." Evidently Tuchkov had made to Sergius corresponding promises.

Having obtained these useful statements, the Bolsheviks once again acted in their customary manner, for they were slow "to pay the piper." Sergius' achievements were evident, but they were far from being complete, and the persecution of the church did not cease after the conclusion of the unwritten concordat. The concessions made by Sergius were in contradiction to the paramount task of the Communist Party—the complete abolition of religion. In 1929–30 the Soviet state undertook a general offensive against all as yet "unconquered positions," and a prominent place in this offensive was assigned to a decisive struggle with the church. As explained in the *Izvestia* (April 24, 1929), this struggle stood in close relation to other tasks of the Communist Party.

Religious ideology is one of the chief obstacles in the path of the socialist reconstruction of the country. Religion and Socialism are incompatible . . . To be an atheist "for one's own sake," leaving others to their own ideas, does not coincide with the proletarian bolshevist methods of Marxism-Leninism. This is a purely reformist view, which sees in religion a private and individual issue. Such a passive attitude is distinctly not admissible either in the ranks of the party, the Young Communist League, among working men and women, in the Red Army, or in general among the advanced elements of the proletarian Soviet public.

With this cry for intensive activity in the fight against the church, we enter upon the third stage of the relations between the Soviet government and religion. Following the earlier attempts to corrupt and discredit the Orthodox church by extending privileges to its adversaries (the first stage), and the subsequent attempts at reconciliation by means of "legalization" based on conditions dictated to it (second stage), we witness a direct and open struggle in which all methods were used, from that of an indirect

pressure upon the conscience of the faithful to acts of overt violence, emanating from a powerful governmental machine.

First, it was necessary to remove from the path an obstacle which, though long since a fictitious one, provided the adversaries with a pretext for defending their rights the Soviet legislation on the freedom of conscience. This was accomplished by amending Article Thirteen of the Constitution on May 22, 1929, and by passing the law of April 8, 1929, on religious societies. Originally, Article Thirteen of the Constitution acknowledged "the right of free religious and anti-religious propaganda" to all citizens, whereas in the amendment the text ran "The freedom of professing a religion and of anti-religious propaganda is acknowledged to all citizens." We know that the freedom of religious propaganda had been limited to divine service within the church and to the private teaching of religion to people over eighteen years of age. Now every oral or printed advocacy of religion could be declared a violation of the Constitution. The previous legislation had restricted to its utmost the work of religious organizations, but the law of April 8, 1929, went much further in the same direction. Any social, cultural, or educational work became impossible; even the holding of divine service was limited to "the place of residence of the members of the said religious society and the location of their prayer-house," while the actual application of the law surrounded worship with such difficulties that its very existence became almost impossible.

It is important to notice that the new communist attack resulted from the realization that all their efforts up to 1928-29 had failed. On this point there are a number of statements made by the Bolsheviks themselves, proving that the official preaching of atheism instead of producing the desired effect upon the masses had, on the contrary, only incited religious feelings and helped to strengthen the opposition against the atheistic propaganda of the government. The best organized propaganda was to be found in the schools, but even there the results were not so marked as the Bolsheviks wished. Here are the statistics expressing the religious mood in six "seven-year" schools (former gymnasia) at Sokolniki, a suburb of Moscow inhabited by workmen, i e, in the very center of power and in a social stratum closest to those in authority during 1927.

	Boys	Girls
Atheists	183 (77 9%)	175 (46 1%)
Believers	52 (22 1%)	205 (53 9%)
Praying	40 (17% )	169 (44 5%)
Church-goers	40 (17% )	154 (40 5%)

This was the maximum of achievement. Among the masses far from the authorities things were different. "The clergy and Sectarians," the *Pravda* complained, "are developing a frenzied propaganda, and we should be deceiving ourselves if we asserted that only old men and women go to church. Hundreds, nay, thousands of young working girls can be found in churches and sectarian chapels. In the province of Ivanov-Voznesensk there are 600 religious societies with 174,300 members, of whom 2,000 are priests and Sectarian 'Fathers,' while there are only 13 anti-religious circles having 200 members" On April 13, 1928, the *Pravda* estimated that there were 123,000 members of atheist organizations throughout the Soviet Union, as against 2,000,000 religious "activists," and during the same year the *Atheist* complained of the influence exerted by the monasteries, under the disguise of "collective farms" "This is not an individual case, but a general rule. In various districts the Communists and members of the Young Communist League were married in church and baptized their children. As to the non-party masses, they were totally under the influence of the obscurants and ready at all times to do their bidding" <sup>4</sup> "The religious tide," wrote atheist teachers, "started overflowing in the families of the peasants, workmen, and employees, and from there entered the schools." For instance, "a teacher, a militant activist, was ardently preaching against priests and the Church, yet at the end of school the class sang 'Tomorrow we go to church, tomorrow we go to church!'" "Many of those who were graduated from atheist schools flocked to Sunday mass, took pleasure in carrying icons in the religious processions through the village, or attended the priests during the church service."

The atheists were inclined to ascribe their inefficacy to inadequate strength and lack of proper organization. On the eve of an

<sup>4</sup> According to a statement made by Iaroslavsky at a regional conference of the Atheist Union in October 1929, an investigation made in Moscow disclosed that 42% of the working people continued to celebrate church rituals

anti-religious campaign conducted in Petrograd during Easter of 1928, the *Red Gazette* published the following figures: "155 churches, plus 41 sectarian chapels, plus 13 Jewish prayer societies—totaling 209 religious Agitprops [Agitation and Propaganda Department]. Is this not too much for Leningrad, which has only 82 Workmen's Clubs, 16 theatres, and 47 cinemas?" Churches were closed upon any pretext, but others sprang up. Another review, the *Anti-Religionist*, pointed out that "the clergy, particularly those of the Old Church [Patriarchal], showed marked activity during the previous five years five churches had been erected in the district. Frequently the clergy were able to nullify the work done in the village reading-rooms."

The higher authorities, however, were inclined to ascribe the failure of the atheist propaganda to more fundamental causes. At the Congress of Soviets in 1928, Rykov was forced to admit that "in the domain of religious struggle, administrative measures did more harm than good, for they might hurt the peasants and workmen who not having renounced their faith were, at the same time, supporting the Soviet government, and a conflict with this social group was not at all to the government's advantage." There we find the chief motive that prevented the Soviet government from directly attacking religion in villages and factories. Lunacharsky supplied another explanation of a more psychological nature. "Our policy of intolerance drove the disease inward in striking the church on the dome, we actually drove it deeper like a nail, whereas our efforts should be directed towards drawing it out. We should apply more subtle methods and beware of using force. . . . A premature victory over the church would only increase the zeal of the faithful." The failure of the previous attempts apparently bore results, the more reasonable among the Bolsheviks—up to Stalin's subsequent change in policy—were willing to give back to the church some of its former freedom.

Great changes took place during 1929-30. The government made every effort to increase the "army," which had been assigned to attack the church, and to draw from it a "Shock Brigade." From June 10 to 19, 1929, there assembled the Second Universal Congress of Atheists, among whose members were 264 workmen, 479 employees, 109 peasants, 72 Red Army men, 52 women, and 24 school

delegates. Comrade Oleshchuk complained that out of 600,000 members of the Union of Atheists only 200 or 250 came from the villages, i. e., of every 600 peasants only one was an atheist, and he asked how it was possible in such circumstances to conduct an anti-religious movement in the villages. The Congress decided to lower the age limit of members to fourteen years, and to add a preparatory group of Pioneer-Atheists, embracing children from six to fourteen years of age. Six months later, on February 17, 1930, the *Izvestia* stated that, by including children, the number of members in the Union had reached 2,500,000. The government in its turn took care to draw the peasants, workmen, teachers, and students into the struggle. From that time on the anti-religious proceedings took place officially not as acts of governmental persecutions, but in the form of unwilling concessions to the masses, which demanded these persecutions of the government. Bells were removed from belfries, churches were closed and demolished, the clergy dismissed—all “in compliance with the wishes of the working masses,” “at the request of the workmen,” by the decision of the “plenary meeting of peasants,” or the “resolution of the town council.” At times there were real epidemics of such resolutions. On February 5, 1930, in the province of Kaluga a series of petitions favoring the removal of bells was presented collectively, and the local railroadmen demanded that the District Executive Committee comply with these requests immediately. The city of Samara, having passed a similar ordinance, on November 7 persuaded the city of Nezhin to join it, and that same day the Nezhin town council resolved that the church bells be removed and given over to the industrialization fund. On that same day, a crowd assembled in the theatre at Ulianinsk and voiced an identical demand, while both Voronezh and Sverdlovsk followed suit. A similar resolution was adopted at a meeting of 10,000 workmen in Alaty, and the local soviet of Iaroslavl “was forced” to issue a decree abolishing the ringing of bells, in accordance with the wishes of 80,000 people! The method of passing all such summary decisions and the difficulty of opposing them by vote are well known. The situation became more involved when the question arose of burning the icons and both closing and demolishing the churches. In these cases sometimes the masses dared to show re-

sistance, which invariably led to fatal results. Still, officially it would be stated that this was done "in compliance with the people's wish." For the benefit of the Russian workmen and peasants the newspapers made an example of the case of Gorlov miners, who in December 1929 had burned 4,000 icons "in the presence of 15,000 workmen." But to rival this the Kramatorsk workmen burned 20,000 icons in January 1930, and then all joined the Atheist Union. Events moved slowly in Tver up to the time that the "Shock Brigade" put the direct question "Will you prove your atheism by handing over your icons?" After this "hundreds of workmen's families cleared their homes" of icons and burned them. The Moscow Soviet was particularly active in closing and demolishing churches; it excelled in destroying many rare monuments of art; officially "at the request of the workmen" the churches and various buildings of the historical Simon Monastery were blown up. In September 1929, the *Anti-Religionist* counted the churches closed during the previous six months as follows: 243 town and 180 village churches, a total of 423, of which 156 were transformed into theatres, cinemas, and museums, 38 into cooperative stores, 10 into veterinary stations, 29 were demolished, 171 left vacant. Besides these there were 154 town and 163 village churches, a total of 317, destined to be demolished. In making the comparison with preceding years, the *Anti-Religionist* was able to register a notable progress: the figures for the six months of 1929 exceeded twice those of the twelve months of 1927 and equaled those of the whole year 1928.

With the abolition of churches, as abodes of "cult," the legalized religious societies found themselves in desperate conditions. The situation is best described in the "Memorandum on the Needs of the Orthodox Patriarchal Church," submitted by Metropolitan Sergius to Smidovich, the Superintendent of Church Affairs in the central government, on February 19, 1930. The memorandum stated that churches were heavily taxed and that the priests were restricted in their civil rights. The churches were considered to be revenue-bearing concerns and therefore had to carry high insurance. They were taxed on their farm produce and were burdened by many obligatory contributions—for tractorization, industrialization, and the purchasing of government bonds; all these pay-

ments had to be met by the members of religious communities, who in case of default answered with their property, their personal immunity, and besides were identified with *kulaks* and had to pay additional taxes. Applications for the registration of religious societies were no longer accepted by the local authorities (although the term for registration expired only on May 1, 1930), and the prosecuting attorneys refused to protect their rights. The churches were closed at the request of atheists; the priests were subjected to taxation far beyond their means, and for non-payment were deprived of all their property; they were prohibited from living in the neighborhood of the church or within the confines of their parish, and anyone giving them living quarters was heavily taxed. Children of the clergy were expelled from schools, church choristers were excluded from professional unions, while the church had to pay their insurance and the royalties to the composers of church music. This was but an incomplete list of the burdens laid upon the church, with the direct object of ruining the cult societies and forcing the members and clergy to abandon their functions. In a number of cases this purpose was achieved, for, aside from direct persecutions, the churches, parishes, and clergy grew poorer and fewer even when, so to speak, they stood on legal grounds. The government, by eliminating the means for the training of a new generation of clergymen, frankly relied upon the extinction of the remaining clergy, who were not in exile or prison or had not abandoned their vocation. The Cult Department of the Commissariat for Home Affairs based its expectations on the following statistics: 50% of the clergymen were over 50 years old; 25% 40-50 years old; 20% 30-40, and only 5% were less than 30 years old. Consequently, in twenty years there would be no more than half the present number, and since no theological schools and books were available, no new influx could be expected.

Wishing to save the church from its grievous position, Metropolitan Sergius was forced to make further concessions as demanded by the government, arousing thereby a new outburst of indignation on the part of the opposition. In view of the campaign being conducted abroad in protest against religious persecutions in Russia, the authorities demanded that he refute these indubitable facts. Sergius yielded to force, but profited by the



opportunity to obtain some redress in the legal situation of the church. It must be observed that for all the cruelty of these persecutions, for all the restrictions of the law and abuses in its application, there was still some legal ground for further existence of the church. Sergius pointed out this fact to the government when, four days before the presentation of his memorandum, he was compelled to state to the representatives of the Soviet press that "in the Soviet Union there were not and never had been any religious persecutions," for due to the decree on the separation of church and state "the professing of any creed was free,"<sup>5</sup> and the decision of the All-Union Central Executive Committee of April 8, 1929 "emphatically excluded all possibility of religious persecutions." Officially, he could rightfully say that the closing of churches was done "not by the initiative of the state, but in compliance with the wish of the people," and that the clergy were persecuted "not for their religious convictions, but under the general statutes." Also, he was correct in pointing out that "in the past the church had been too closely connected with the monarchy" and that "even up to the present time some of us cannot see that the past is gone forever." At another conference, held with representatives of the American press, Metropolitan Sergius was able to state that the Patriarchal church had been reestablished in part. "There are 30,000 parishes, subject to our Patriarchal church," he declared, "each of them with a priest. The number of clergy, naturally, exceeds that of the parishes, because in every parish there are from one to three priests and sometimes even more than that. All these parishes are under the spiritual guidance of 163 bishops, who stand in canonical subordination to the Patriarch. I am not counting the bishops who have retired and are keeping only a spiritual communion with the Patriarch. We can testify that the total number of Orthodox parishioners amounts to several tens of millions. . . . At present the situation of the church has grown worse, but we are hoping that even under the new conditions of material existence faith will survive. . . . Of course we feel anxious about the rapid progress of atheism, yet being true believers, we

<sup>5</sup> This declaration was in perfect accord with the amendment to the Constitution of May 22, 1929, which in excluding the right of "religious propaganda" did not abolish the freedom of "professing a religion."

are convinced that the divine light can never be extinguished and that in the course of time it will be resurrected in the heart of man."

The importance of this confidence and these achievements can be judged by remembering that, notwithstanding the strong support of the authorities, the Living Church in October 1925, at the peak of its glory, had under its jurisdiction only 12,593 parishes with 16,540 clergymen, and 192 bishops in 108 dioceses, while by January 1, 1927, these figures had decreased to 6,245 parishes with 10,815 clergymen and 140 bishops in 84 dioceses. The Living Church then declared that the former figures had been exaggerated.

A comparison of the number of parishioners and clergy of the Patriarchal Church and that of the New Church demonstrates again which of them enjoyed greater popularity with the masses. It proves also how little the church and its leaders profited by the tremendous mental and moral impetus, which the revolution might have given to the religious conscience of the masses. Prior to the revolution some of the intellectuals had connected the revolutionary idea with an opportunity for church reform, but the actual development of events proved quite the contrary. In every creed, as observed by eyewitnesses, there were some individual attempts at modernization, but in general during the days of distress the intellectuals drew closer to church tradition.

We have seen how, helped by favorable circumstances, the more serious movement towards church reform had led to the establishment of a separate "new" church. Indeed, many of its adherents sincerely believed in the possibility of a reformed Orthodoxy. At first they worked on a comparatively large scale (see the program of the Living Church), but having overcome many external obstacles at the price of subjecting themselves to the Bolsheviks, they were suddenly stopped by a far more serious internal one—the simple faith of the people. Even the most moderate attempts at reformation met with opposition from the masses. Their joining of the New Church proved to be but temporary and superficial. Thus in all probability, the Russian Orthodox church will survive the revolution without undergoing any changes, finding in this very changelessness its chief weapon of defense against the teach-

ings of atheism. In this field the conservatism of the church leaders was merged with that of the populace. The Tikhonian church found its power in its unity with the masses and in their support.

This does not mean, however, that the revolution and atheistic propaganda will leave no mark on the spirit of the people. Too much was done to awaken and strengthen the religious conscience of the faithful to permit the reaction to remain in the negative phase, that of a mere protest against atheism. Some positive results are bound to come, but it is more probable that new developments will take place outside the Orthodox church. Again, as during the last part of the seventeenth century, the popular faith will separate itself from that of the church. One can see a sign of this in the growth of Sectarianism since the revolution.

Generally speaking, here as in other fields of life, the broken chain of historical development is being welded anew. We notice, after a very strong attack on the pre-revolutionary state of things, a gradual return to the past, yet with a new fund of experience and a new impulse towards internal evolution. It is premature to say who will profit most by this impulse, but one thing is certain: each of the present trends of Russian religious faith can only assimilate from the revolution that for which it was prepared by its preceding history.



## EDITOR'S POSTSCRIPT

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THE situation as described in the last chapter remained virtually unchanged until 1934-35. None of the more essential desiderata of Metropolitan Sergius were satisfied by the government, which continued to regard the church with distrust and hostility. Nor was there any noticeable let-down in the anti-religious activities of governmental and party agencies. The church, on its part, apparently adhered to that policy of political loyalty to the Soviet régime which had been enunciated by Metropolitan Sergius. Simultaneously, it tried to strengthen its position in the purely religious field as far as that was possible under the circumstances of its still precarious existence. It seems that it succeeded not only in holding its own but even in making some progress at the expense of the New Church which, according to all available information, continued to decline until it lost all importance in the religious life of the country.

The years that preceded the new change in governmental policy were marked by increased tension in the international relations of the Soviet Union. The Japanese occupation of Northern Manchuria in 1932 and Hitler's advent to power in Germany the following year created a situation in which Russia had to face the possibility of a simultaneous attack from east and west. More than before, problems of national defense began to loom large in the minds of Soviet leaders, and in a broader sense these problems included that of national morale and of the degree of popular support the government could rely upon in case of a crisis. Undoubtedly coupled with that concern was a growing realization that, in spite of all the efforts of previous years, religious sentiment had survived persecutions, and that in particular the Orthodox church still maintained its hold over a considerable part of the population. No reliable statistics are available, but even Iaroslavsky, the head of

the Union of Atheists, stated on several occasions that the believers constituted about half of the population. The census of January 1937 included a question on religious beliefs. The results of this census, which according to official explanation had been falsified by the Trotskyites, were never made public, and significantly in the new census of January 1939 no question on religion was included. There had been rumors that in the first census forty per cent of those questioned declared themselves to be religious. Information published in the Soviet press suggested that religious sentiment was widely distributed among many groups of the population. Not only old people but school children and youth as well, not only the intellectuals but also workers and collectivized peasants, in some cases even members of communist organizations, seemed to be affected. From the same source one could learn of various ways in which the believers tried to satisfy their religious needs under the trying conditions of discrimination and persecution: travels to distant churches from localities in which places of worship had been closed, rites by proxy, itinerant priests, non-registered religious groups, and secret monasteries. Apparently the excesses of the anti-religious drive were defeating its purpose.

It is in the light of this evidence, as well as of the dangers presented by the international situation, that we must approach the new governmental practice in religious matters which became manifest in 1934-35. There was no outspoken change in the government's general attitude towards religion nor were any radical or far-reaching concessions made to the church, but there was a certain soft-pedaling of anti-religious propaganda, and a number of minor measures were passed which obviously were intended to placate the believers. Anti-Easter and anti-Christmas demonstrations were discontinued, while at the same time sale of special products needed for the traditional Easter celebration was resumed in the market and in state stores, and lighting of Christmas trees was again permitted. Of a more substantial nature was the decree of December 29, 1935, which allowed the children of the clergy to enroll in any school—a privilege that previously had been denied them. This was followed by the abolition of the disfranchisement of priests in the new constitution of December 5, 1936. Otherwise the so-called "Stalin constitution," widely heralded as an embodi-

ment of Soviet democracy, did not introduce any change in the relations of church and state in the Soviet Union. As before, religious rights were limited to the exercise of the cult within church buildings, and freedom of faith, without any right to proselytize or engage in missionary activities, was paired with unconditional freedom of anti-religious propaganda.

The relatively conciliatory attitude towards religion, first shown by the Soviet government in 1934-35, proved to be of short duration. In the autumn of 1937 there came a sudden reversal which the authorities themselves subsequently connected with the first elections to the Supreme Soviet of the Union held on the basis of the new constitution. The idea was to eliminate the possibility of supposedly counter-revolutionary churchmen influencing the elections. A considerable number of bishops and priests were arrested and tried for alleged acts of espionage and sabotage in the interests of foreign powers or for planning to overthrow the Soviet régime. Simultaneously many churches were closed and, according to some calculations, their number even exceeded that of the previous large-scale closure of 1929-30. It was significant, however, that governmental spokesmen took pains to draw a distinction between the leaders of the church, many of whom were suspected to be irreconcilable enemies of the régime, and the rank and file of the believers whose loyalty was not doubted. Neither were the previously granted minor concessions withdrawn during this outburst of the old hostility towards the church.

Apparently the same underlying reasons that had prompted the conciliatory measures of 1934-35 continued to be in force, and were even more pressing than before, as since January 1939 a new phase of development set in which has been described as the "new religious policy" of the Soviet government.<sup>1</sup> This time special instructions were issued to stop attempts at liquidating religion with one stroke or to combat it by administrative measures, such as the closing of churches. It was officially admitted that in the preceding period anti-religious propaganda had been overdone, and governmental and party agencies were cautioned not to offend the religious sentiment of the believers. Moreover, the new change in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. N. S. Timasheff, "Religion in Soviet Russia," *Thought*, vol. XV, No. 56, March 1940. This is the best brief discussion of the subject in English.

policy was given a theoretical justification. Wholesale and indiscriminate condemnation of Christianity was declared to be a mistake and a vulgarization of Marxism. A real Marxist should understand that at certain historical periods, and under certain conditions, Christianity could be a progressive force. Such was its function in the early centuries of its existence when it had a definitely democratic and even revolutionary character. Likewise, Russia's conversion to Christianity back in the tenth century should be regarded as a historical event of positive importance inasmuch as it introduced into the life of the Russian people elements of culture higher than they had known before. The last point is of particular interest: the revaluation of the part played by the Christian church in Russian history was in line with the general tendency to restore to a position of honor certain events and figures of Russia's historical past in order to strengthen patriotism and a sense of national unity.<sup>2</sup>

It would be premature to speak of a reconciliation between church and state in Soviet Russia. As yet the official materialist philosophy of the Communist régime has not been repudiated, and real religious freedom has not been granted. But for the time being the government has found it necessary to modify its former uncompromising position, and to allow religious sentiment a somewhat broader scope of expression.

How the fate of religion in Russia will be affected by the momentous crisis through which the country is passing today no one can predict with certainty.

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*October 1941*

<sup>2</sup> It must be said that this tendency began to be noticed several years before 1939. For instance, in December 1936, the comic opera *Bogatyni* (Titans) was taken from the boards because of its satirical treatment of Russia's conversion.



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